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A QUARTERLY FOR THE INDEPENDENT THINKER

Winter · 1946-47

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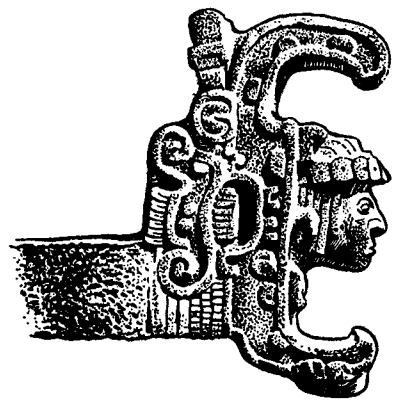

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 16 *Winter 1946-47* NUMBER 1

Overruled

THE DATE was September 28, 1946. The place was Lawrenceburg, Tennessee. The occasion: the trial of "The State of Tennessee *vs.* Saul Blair and Others." As Henry Moscow, staff correspondent of the *New York Post*, describes the scene, Z. Alexander Looby, Negro attorney for the defense, had barely risen to object to a prosecution question when Judge Joe M. Ingram broke in flatly, "Overruled."

"But, Your Honor —" said Looby.

"I take it you are going to except, and I am overruling your exception," said the Judge.

"Before I have finished?" asked Looby.

"I don't care what you're going to say," replied Ingram. . . .

That such a statement should pass almost unnoticed is, at first glance, incredible. Upon longer reflection, it is terrifying. Not because of the Judge's flagrant offense against the most elementary concept of justice. There have been such judges before; in a democratic society they are eventually taken care of. What is terrifying is simply that the incident attracted so little attention. This could happen only in a climate of opinion in which total prejudice is so common as to be taken for granted.

We live in a time of indiscriminate black-and-white labeling and hysterical or malicious cataloguing. Let an honest conservative express his fears about government planning: he is a Fascist. Let an honest liberal defend some particular strike: he is a Communist.

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This easy division of the whole world into two hostile camps — "liberal" *vs.* "fascist" or "democratic" *vs.* "communist" — has often drawn comment. What has been recognized less frequently is that it is but a step from such slovenly or perverse thinking to the settled habit of reading only what one is sure will corroborate one's already entrenched prejudice. And from this point it is only another, still shorter step to Judge Ingram's, "Overruled. . . . I don't care what you're going to say" — which has at least the merit of saying exactly what he means.

Over the hubbub of violent, stupid and bigoted name-calling a few sure and courageous voices are heard every day. A few individuals think and speak for themselves; a few newspapers refuse to tilt their headlines and news stories to satisfy their advertisers' slanted views; a few magazines continue to weigh and consider in print more than one point of view on a given subject. It is our earnest hope that THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR is one of these publications, and that it fulfills the purpose set forth in its by-line: A Quarterly for the Independent Thinker.

In this particular issue, we are proud to print Professor Hastings' plea for independent thinking, which develops extensively the theme I can only introduce here. We recommend Mr. Berkes' and Mr. Suehsdorf's sober and dispassionate analyses of international issues particularly susceptible to biased treatment and partisan fulminations. We hope that the challenging opinions expressed by Mrs. Middlebrook and Professor Carleton will draw fire from equally articulate dissenters. We are especially eager to receive and print observations of all sorts on the debate in the current American Scholar Forum over the role of government in medicine.

There are many famous definitions of freedom. I know of none more trenchant, more to the point than James Thurber's homely assertion, during the War, that we were fighting for the right to sit down at a table with a friend and disagree with him. Not call him names, but argue with him. And listen to him — not overrule him before he has spoken.

Hiram Haydn

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America's Choice in China

Adie Suehsdorf

CHINA is in big trouble. She is the largest nation in the world without a stable government or a clear idea of where she is going. It is imperative that she have both. What is preventing her from getting them is a civil conflict arising from social and economic inequality. This is an old problem in every nation's history, even China's. She is trying to solve it by negotiation and by an undeclared war waged principally to strengthen the hands of the negotiators. Neither side wants an exhausting fight to the finish; it's certain that the rest of us can't afford it. Too much depends on the outcome.

For China is not a country any more. She is a market, a political proving ground, a reservoir of military manpower, a strategic base, and one-fifth of the Big Five. As China goes, so in time will go the colonial peoples today squatting on their haunches in Lahore, in Surabaya, in Leopoldville. So will go Empire. So will go Detroit and Magnitogorsk. By the terms of internationalism as the world now understands them, China's troubles have become universal, with particularly sharp twinges of concern being felt in the United States. These days, if you punch China, we roar.

With the stakes so very high, it is understandable that we Americans cannot resist the itch to influence the course of China's struggle. But I believe we err if we think we shall find one solution to what is really two problems: China's internal stability,

© ADIE SUEHSDORF spent two years in the CBI Theater with OWI and is at present article editor for *This Week Magazine*. He was for four years a reporter for the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

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and the place of China, stable or not, in a precariously balanced world.

It is true that the problems are interacting, but they are not the same thing and they are separable. A solution of the former satisfactory to the majority of Chinese would guarantee a solution of the latter satisfactory to us. A solution of the former satisfactory primarily to us and to the Chinese groups willing to play along with us will not, as many of us seem to think, result in a solution of the latter satisfactory to us, or China, or anyone else.

In short, we cannot urge General Marshall to help form a representative Chinese government (Problem A) and then announce, as did a recent issue of the unofficial "Army and Navy Bulletin," that "the [U. S.] Marines are in China because of the predatory policy of Soviet Russia" (Problem B). A solution of China's internal problem in terms of China's usefulness to us as a bulwark against Russia may be eminently desirable, but it will not work. Nor will any course that does not rest on true freedom of action for China.

II

Inside China, the conflict today is between the Central Government, headed by Chiang Kai-shek and dominated by the Kuomintang Party, and the Chinese Communist Party, headed by Mao Tze-tung.

These factions are old antagonists who know each other well. Their fight has been going on for twenty years, but many of the leaders who saw it begin probably will be around to see it end.

They are fighting along feudal lines, as Chinese dukes and warlords have always fought, because China is still a feudal country and opinions are no stronger than the army behind them. But do not be misled. The issues are subtle and sophisticated. Possibly they are irreconcilable. Ultimately we may have to choose between them. This would be a challenge to our wisdom and a rare privilege as well, for it is a choice that has not yet been given to the Chinese people.

Chiang and Mao. What do they stand for? Who supports them? Who will win?

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Chiang's Central Government is a prime example of how little it takes to control a country. It is an exclusive, one-party machine, static, monstrously inefficient and corrupt. It draws its members almost entirely from the Kuomintang (membership: *ca.* 3,400,000), which represents the propertied class in China — the landowners, the merchants, the bankers — and which bitterly resists change. It also operates a considerable army, and a secret political police whose reputation for fearsomeness, under the late Tai Li, rivaled any in the world. It rests heavily on foreign recognition and support, which it gets from every interested nation, including Russia.

It is implacably anti-Communist and claims (as do the Communists, with variations) to be the spiritual heir to Dr. Sun Yat-sen. Unfortunately, when Dr. Sun died in 1925, he left much of his work unfinished. His great San Min Chu I, or Three Principles of the People, which are the cardinal points of his legacy to China, have consequently had many interpretations placed upon them. One of the heartbroken disciples at Sun's deathbed, for instance, later found them not incompatible with servitude as a Japanese puppet. That was Wang Ching-wei.

The three principles are Nationalism, Democracy and the People's Livelihood. Fulfillment of them would seem to require a democratic form of government. Yet the Central Government (or the Kuomintang; the terms are interchangeable) has done remarkably little to put them into effect. It usually explains that Dr. Sun also said — not unreasonably — that ignorant China would need a period of "tutelage" before she could assume the task of self-government. But the Kuomintang seems to have interpreted this as a gigantic escape clause for self-perpetuation.

And if the Kuomintang has applied this concept rigidly to China, it has also been rigid with itself. The only political variety it has must come from an impotent group of "moderates" and "liberals" within itself. Many of them are thinking men, but the power of ideas rests in their ability to spread, and China's liberals have no audience. They are generally ignored by the Kuomintang, except as window dressing. In this, they resemble China's third party, a small coalition calling itself the Democratic

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League. This is primarily an academic group which has shown a great deal of forthrightness and moral courage, considering its helplessness. In any democratic Chinese government, the League should be represented. At present, however, it merely issues critical manifestoes whose pungency may be rewarded with curtailment of the authors' government rice rations.

Probably the best and worst of the Central Government's record stems from the fact that it was in power when China won its greatest war. It would be stretching to say that the Central Government won the war; Chiang energized it sufficiently to enable it to hang on at great sacrifice until the War could be won elsewhere. That was no inconsiderable accomplishment and a tribute to Chiang's singleness of purpose. Certainly many of the people in his government sold out, or warped their principles under the tremendous pressures of a long and terrible struggle.

There were military defections of such alarming proportions that the government was compelled to dream up the "crooked line policy" to save face. This devious reasoning permitted Chinese who found themselves in tight spots to go over to the Japanese as puppets although, deep down inside, they were still loyal to China. It strains one's credulity to believe that very much accrued to the benefit of China by this maneuver.

There were the commercial sell-outs, which the government made little pretense of controlling. Speculators ran wild with every tangible asset China had. The currency blew up. There was traffic across the Japanese lines in goods China could not spare. Every resource and raw material was manipulated on the black market for individual profit while Chungking factories, as Donald Nelson discovered, were unable to obtain government contracts for the production of war materials.

Meanwhile, the people suffered.

This is a sketchy recitation of commonly accepted fact. It is significant because it shows corruption to be at the top. It is incredible to me that "China's friends" can acknowledge these ills of the Central Government and yet insist that a democratic future for China lies with it. When does the cleanup begin? The moral conduct of government does not depend on stabilization of

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the economy and cannot await the outcome of political strife. Government is not circumstances, but people. It is muscular, or it is flabby. It shouts or it holds its breath. It believes in itself or it dies. The most I think we can expect of the Central Government is that it will continue to be anti-Communist. Its program to destroy Communism has been unsuccessful, but it has always been vigorous.

And what then? Does democracy grow like the mandrake under Communism's gallows? Whom does this exorcism of an idea please — besides the Kuomintang? There had better be more than that in it for us.

Let's consider the Chinese Communists for a moment. There's only one point I would make: that their program has penetrated into the life of China, not only to its benefit, but beyond all possibility of suppression or recall.

This has happened because the Party is composed of real, live Marxist Communists. There are, they say, one million of them, and they know how to operate on the peasant's level. Their leaders are men of diverse backgrounds. Mao is a Hunanese, trained in the way of the scholar. Chou En-lai comes from Mandarin stock. General Chu Teh is a former Szechwan warlord, a Bunyanesque man who forswore opium, concubines and robber barony to join the Party. The Party includes the usual hodge-podge of old revolutionaries, intellectuals, soldiers and splinters from the Kuomintang. It has no foreign support. The charge has been made persistently that Russia is covertly directing or guiding or equipping the Communist movement in China, but that was untrue during the war, and I have yet to see persuasive or responsible evidence of it since physical contact was established in Manchuria. A. T. Steele of the *New York Herald Tribune* reported from Peiping on September 16 that "despite the proximity of North Manchuria to the Soviet frontier, there still is no evidence of direct material aid by the Russians to the Communist forces."

China's Communists of course started with Marx, as did Russia's. Perhaps for some readers this is connection enough. Actually, I think a certain amount of harm was done to China's

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Communists by the earnest American reporters who Bowdlerized them into agrarian reformers and Minnesota farmer-laborites. To the unthinking, it has since appeared that the Communists were simply deceitful, rather than the reports inaccurate. Not so. The Chinese Communists have never pretended to be anything but what they are, and their program for China has been explicitly set forth by Mao Tze-tung and other spokesmen many times. Perhaps it is naïve to quote Chairman Mao, but everything I have been able to observe indicates that he and his followers are running their set course with relentless exactitude.

The following comes from a monograph called "China's New Democracy." It was written by Mao in 1940 and its dialectics would hardly win the Communists any American friends today. Nevertheless, I have seen no better exposition of what the Communists are up to, and I cannot imagine why there has been so little reference to it, pro or con.

"Since the aggression of foreign capitalism," writes Mao, "and since some capitalist elements gradually grew within Chinese society — i.e., in the 100 years from the Opium War to the present anti-Japanese war — China has gradually turned into a colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal society. [Mao differentiates between the "colonial" character of Japanese-occupied areas, the "semi-colonial," character of non-occupied areas and the "semi-feudalism" of both.] This is the character of the present Chinese society, or the national condition of China. The dominant politics and economy are therefore colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal, and so is the culture."

A few paragraphs later, he says:

"It is evident that if [this is] the present society of China, the process of China's revolution must be divided into two steps. The first step is to change the colonial, semi-colonial and semi-feudal form of society into an independent democratic society, while the second step is to push the revolution forward to establish a socialist society. What we are carrying on now is the first step of the Chinese revolution."

Earlier he has said: "The democracy of the first step is not

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democracy in its general sense, but a new, special type, of a Chinese style — the New Democracy."

New Democracy is explained as an improvement on the outworn "capitalist society dictated by the bourgeoisie." It will be "a society ruled by the alliance of several revolutionary classes."

In short, China's Communists hope to achieve a socialist state operated by the "proletariat." At present, however, the naked country has nothing to socialize. Ergo, a democratic-capitalist society will be established to produce the goods for socialization. How long this will take and when the switch will be made is not even guessed at. The time for socialization will come when what the Communists regard as the evils of capitalism set in. This is when the "welfare of the people" is threatened by the processes of production.

So much for theory. The "first step" Mao speaks of has begun. By virtue of the Central Government blockade of the main Communist base of Shen-Kan-Ning (parts of Shensi, Kansu and Ninghsia provinces), the Party has had about ten relatively uninterrupted years of controlled experimentation in New Democracy. Industrial accomplishments have been limited, for the area lacks fuel, power and factories in any quantity. Nevertheless, the Communists managed during the war to supply themselves with the output of their own mills, radio shops, foundries, chemical plants and arsenals. Larger strides were made in agriculture, medicine, education and government economics and finance. Their accomplishments are commendable because they show smart employment of few resources to the great benefit of the people. A few examples:

Peasant villages which feed Communist troops passing through can deduct an equal amount of grain from their annual taxes. Garrison troops work in the fields, raising their own food in order to be no burden on the community. Herb doctors are encouraged to discard harmful remedies, are instructed in new techniques and used to the limit of their abilities to augment the few western-trained physicians. Wages, hours and working conditions are fixed at a fair level and protected. (Workers' wages are calculated in amounts of millet. Each pay day the employees receive suffi-

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cient cash to buy their millet, regardless of commodity price fluctuations.) Vast public information programs are always in progress. Toward the war's end, they were instructing the people in everything from pediatrics to sabotage. They were encouraging — and getting — active peasant participation in government.

These are typical advances. And Americans who journeyed into the rough-cut forward areas during the war found progress similar to that in model Yenan, where I was.

It is not the whole picture. China's Communists incline to the kind of nerveless unanimity of thought and action which we are used to associating with Soviet Russia. Their organization conforms to the Soviet pattern in function and terminology, although Chairman Mao is no Stalin. Many accomplishments are subject to several interpretations: there is no prostitution; on the other hand, there are relatively few women in Communist areas. Many failings follow the same pattern: there is no opposition press, but there is a lack of presses.

Communist China resembles what I imagine the United States must have been in Jefferson's time. It is energetic, fearless, its people sure of themselves but uncertain of the responsibilities of freedom; the goals are set but not yet achieved; above all, headway is being made. In Communist China you can see it happening. In all spheres of human activity, all at once, the people are learning what it means to have a stake in their own future.

III

Where does this leave us, and what shall we do? We fear Communism, yet in China we may have to work with it because it is in the ascendancy. We like the Kuomintang talk of democracy, but democracy languishes and the Kuomintang is moribund. Meanwhile, both sides jockey for position. The Central Government, like the Japanese during the war, occupies the large industrial and commercial cities and the communications links between them — a huge spider web. The Communists are strong in the countryside among the peasants, who are most of China. Warfare may achieve tactical gains, even a tactical victory. It will not settle the ideological struggle any more than did our own Civil War.

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Our position is awkward. Both sides sincerely wish our support and each is anxious not to antagonize us. But we have entered the struggle at a late hour for China. Two ways of life are fighting for supremacy. There can be no compromise for China dependent upon our own new worries about the balance of power in Asia. That is why, despite General Marshall's obvious good faith and prodigious efforts, both sides manage to find his, and our, solutions unworkable.

From here on out, it seems to me that several courses are possible for us.

One, we can continue to support the Kuomintang. There are strong reasons why we should do so. The Central Government is anti-Communist; it is in power (we dislike an about face); Chiang still has enormous personal prestige; and we feel that somehow our Open Door economic interests will be better safeguarded.

Against this policy are ranged some equally important facts. The drive against communism in China will assure chaos for a long time to come. The Communists have, unfortunately for Chiang, increased in strength since 1927, when the campaign of extermination began. There is a feeling that a few more men, a few more weapons will finish them off, but Chiang has always had military superiority and failed. I would not bet on his success now.

Furthermore, the anti-Communist feeling extends to Russia too, despite the convenience of the Soong-Stalin pact. The coony gentlemen of the Kuomintang would like to make this appear to be a community of interests with us. Maybe so. Personally I would hesitate to sponsor any government with anti-Russian prejudices until I was sure it could hold up its end in a brawl. Since China cannot, I believe her attitude is dangerous and one of the quicker ways of drawing us into conflict with Russia.

As for the second point, the Central Government is in power primarily because we are keeping it there — with money, goods and recognition.

As for Chiang, he is mortal. Without slurring his past accomplishments, it is possible to say that he is tired now and that his machine has produced no outstanding successor.

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As for the Open Door, I fail to see how a government which maintains a depressed living standard for its people can offer better markets to the world than one which is raising the consumers' ability to buy and would be just as willing to deal with all comers.

A second course would be to switch our support to the Chinese Communists. This is outside the realm of practical possibility, although we might be surprised at the results if we tried it. The Communists have always said they wanted our help, not Russia's. I think this is because they feel we would furnish without strings attached the tools they need to develop China. They do not seem to be so sure of Russia. They would also welcome the kind of financial, commercial, engineering and technical assistance we have always offered China — if it were not of an "exploitive" or "imperialistic" nature.

The third possibility is to get out of China. This, too, we are unlikely to do. It would result in unchecked civil war. A long one. The Central Government is debilitated, the Communists are inferior in war materials. Irrespective of who wins, China would be even weaker than she is and, we are told, Russia would move in. (I am still inclined to believe that China's Communists are Chinese first, and that Russia would find herself in the piquant position of combating tried-and-true Communist resistance measures should she attempt a Red China "anschluss.")

The fourth course is the only one in which I see hope for China and the world. That is to extricate ourselves from our present contretemps and enlist Russia's assistance in bringing pressure on all Chinese parties to form a coalition. It would take some hard thinking and some real doing, but the benefits would be tremendous.

Most important, it would stop the Chinese from playing us off against Russia. As long as our suspicion of Russia remains, we are impotent mediators in China. We cannot make the Central Government behave by threats; threats can only involve non-support, which would lead to the collapse and extinction of an agency we are anxious to preserve. We cannot make the Communists behave by threats. We have given no support which can be

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withdrawn, they owe us nothing, and they are not easily frightened. Furthermore, unfriendliness toward them would, as they say, force them into Russia's arms if and when they triumph.

This policy would also recognize a point which has long needed acknowledgment: that Russia is, and probably always will be, vitally concerned in Asia. We might stop scaring ourselves about her intentions by undertaking to find out what they are, preparatory to deciding a mutual course based on an independent self-governing China.

Perhaps it is felt that Russia would refuse. I think world opinion would force her to accept if our proposal were honestly meant and clearly stated. We have been at odds with Russia so far because we work ourselves into regrettable positions such as that in China.

This will have to be something different. Russia must understand that this is no power grab, no plan to whack up spheres of influence, no perpetuation of empire — and so must we. (Britain should be left out of this one. She cuts no ice in China, and her interests have nothing to do with the welfare of the Chinese people.)

It must be a sturdy effort to get a working government, representative of all parties, under way in China. The Chinese Constitution should be dusted off and put into effect. It is a Kuomintang creation, but it is a good framework for government and the Communists would very likely fit themselves into it. The task of the administration operating under it would be to tackle, with every material assistance the rest of the world can give it, the jobs which everyone knows must be done to develop China. The Russian-American partnership would guarantee that the government's efforts were concentrated on these tasks. It would step in, or call upon the Security Council for action, in case China's leaders halted progress to indulge in civil conflict.

The partners could not guarantee the permanent form of China's government, nor should they attempt to shape it. That is for China's political parties to do. If the Kuomintang is worthy to lead the country as the majority party, let it sell its program to the people. If the Communists feel put upon, let them prove to

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China that they've got what she needs, or be rejected. Usher the Democratic League out of hiding. Let new parties arise.

This is, I believe, the kind of solution we tell ourselves that we have always stood for. I cannot say what the mechanics of it would be. I will settle for men willing to try it. For it gives China the widest possible latitude to stabilize herself (Problem A) and thus offers the best assurance that in time she will be a fit and flourishing colleague in world affairs (Problem B).

We might even find that we could get on with the Russians, too. That's Problem C, but it's a happy thought.

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Phi Beta Kappa and the State of the Union

William T. Hastings

TWO snatches of verse, one from Kipling and one from Thomas Gray, have recently been haunting me in fantastic sequence: "The captains and the kings depart . . . and leave the world to darkness and to" — you and me. And there joined them in my mind Arnold's famous cliché about the "darkling plain swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight, where ignorant armies clash by night."

When the great captains of the Allied armies were stemming the wave of the future, and then beating down its obscene force; when the kings of speech, Winston Churchill and Franklin Roosevelt, were phrasing unforgettably the will of free men to be free and the desire of mankind to be brothers — our purposes seemed clear, and joint action seemed easy and inevitable. But with the sheathing of the captains' swords and the stilling of our spokesmen's tongues the world has a different, a less comfortable aspect.

International relations have definitely worsened since Yanks and Russians clasped hands at the Elbe and since the rush to ratify the Charter of the United Nations. Suspicion, fear and even hate stare at us from the headlines; the red-baiters and the twisters of the British lion's tail are at it openly or by indirection. On the domestic scene we have racial discrimination, religious intolerance, riots and intimidation. The ineffable Bilbo raves about Dagoes and Kikes. The Dies Committee splashes red paint on the friends of Spanish Republicans, on the PAC, on liberal

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journalists and teachers. The FEPC is pigeonholed; the efforts to prevent inflation by price control are sabotaged; full employment is paid lip service, plotted against, or openly laughed at by those who are waiting for mass unemployment to force wages down. The brotherhood of man is reduced to minimal proportions as trade barriers are set up between one of our forty-eight sovereign states and its neighbors.

Though not fully organized and still partly carried on by individuals and small groups, the pattern behind all this is unpleasantly like the one our late enemies followed: to keep power which is threatened by reform; to gain power in order to make money; and, as a means to power, cynically to set class against class, creed against creed, race against race.

How deep is the cleavage among Americans? How fundamental the confusion? It is difficult to say, because it is so difficult to distinguish between the superficial and the basic. The newspapers do not help to promote a calm and dispassionate public mind. They must have headlines, and their particular neurosis (the headline neurosis) now turns every postwar skirmish between industry and the unions into a pitched battle between dictatorship and democracy. Old-line conservatives look under their beds every night for lurking Communists; similarly, the liberal press too often sees a Fascist plot behind opposition to the social reforms it advocates.

But admitting the superficial and transitory element in the current unrest, there is still ground enough for concern. To thoughtful persons the main danger seems to lie in the tendency to discredit the basic assumptions of our form of government. We have all gone to school to psychology; we know the power of propaganda. "Say a thing often enough and you will be believed" has been transferred from the slogans of advertising to a technique in shaping mass opinion — and not only by Hitler. Another special trick is to make irrational appeals to prejudice by the use of epithets. How sweetly upon the ear fall such phrases as "the American way" and "free enterprise"! How fearsome are "Communist," "New Dealer," "bureaucracy," "regimentation"! How dreadful to be a "brain truster" or a "long-haired pro-

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fessor"! These techniques are based upon contempt for the influence of the intelligent and contempt for the intelligence of the majority.

Again, when it is proposed to extend the supervisory powers of the government (state or national) to protect the public from abuses, the case for the opposition is summed up in the formula "more business in government and less government in business." It is argued that the weaker the government the more democratic. Overlooking the familiar instances of concealed trade agreements for price-fixing, of excessive salary and bonus schedules for "key" executives, of nepotism in the appointment of corporation officers, of the violation of price ceilings on the petty scale of half-a-dollar or the majesty of half-a-million — overlooking these evidences that no group has a monopoly of virtue, it is argued that private enterprise is honest, efficient and public-spirited. It is maintained that we must not permit state or federal government to invade such a field as public utilities or extend its efforts for the conservation of national resources, because power must not be placed in the hands of corrupt politicians.

This last proposition, that government cannot be trusted because it is corrupt, is familiar in another form: the widespread attacks on Congress for stupidity or venality. One does not need to defend Congress, and especially particular congressmen, from charges of parochialism or timidity or prejudice; but one should hesitate long before lending himself to sweeping condemnation of either the legislative or the executive branch of our government. To do so is to accept the implied disbelief in democratic institutions which underlies such criticism, and which unfortunately is well established in certain groups.

We all know the imperfect workings of democracy. Not even the pure democracy of the New England town meeting works perfectly; not even college faculty meetings demonstrate the perfect marriage of pure reason and pure hearts. A benevolent despotism — academic or political — has its points; or would have if we could count on the benevolence. There, of course, is the trouble. Behind all the confusion of counsel, the discordant voices of controversy, the animosity and vituperation, is the driving

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force of self-interest. How shall that very human motive be turned to the general good?

Not, I believe, by canonizing it, as is too often attempted today; not by talking about enlightened self-interest, or about a realistic approach to international or domestic problems. Idealism is a better guide than realism, hope a higher human attribute than cynicism or despair. It is better to attempt a sympathetic understanding of Russia than to be tough with her. It is best to face our economic dilemmas in a more altruistic spirit than that of "I'll get mine," or that unconfessed motto of *laissez-faire* capitalism, "Every man for himself and the devil take the hindmost." It is better to try to enlighten the voters than to decry their competence or to mislead them.

What we need is to perfect our democratic machinery, not abandon it. We need to renew our belief in the honesty and the dignity of man. We need to take the long view rather than the short view, to ask not what will put most money in my pocket today, but what will be best in the long run for the community, the nation and the world. We need to be Christians, and practicing Christians, too. We need to remember the second great commandment, to love thy neighbor as thyself. We have no need to fear though we be called dreamer, starry-eyed idealist, impractical theorist. We need to have experienced the illumination which came the hard way to King Lear and the Earl of Gloucester. Lear on the heath cried:

> Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
> That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
> How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
> Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
> From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
> Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp,
> Expose yourself to feel what wretches feel,
> That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
> And show the heavens more just.

The blind Gloucester addressed his guide, the supposed Tom o' Bedlam, in similar words, the climax of which curiously anticipates one of the alleged heresies of the New Deal, "the redistribution of wealth":

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That I am wretched,
Makes thee the happier; heavens, deal so still:
Let the superfluous and lust-dieted man,
That slaves your ordinance, that will not see
Because he doth not feel, feel your power quickly:
So distribution should undo excess
And each man have enough.

These appeals for Christian sympathy and charity were addressed to a callous or unthinking world. In our day, too, there is need of believers in the Christian ethic, and we need to work at it.

What has all this to do with Phi Beta Kappa?

Most of us will agree that Phi Beta Kappa as a corporate body should not advocate or promote particular social, economic or other causes. It should never become a pressure group. Rather, Phi Beta Kappa should be a state of mind, a climate of the soul: the composite photograph of ninety-odd thousand men and women possessed of liberal culture. In one chapter of our Society an attempt has been made to enumerate the elements of liberal culture, as one of the criteria for the selection of new members. Among them are: intellectual honesty and tolerance, range of intellectual interests, and understanding—not merely knowledge. If "honesty" means readiness to hear all the evidence and accept its conclusions even against one's cherished opinions; if "tolerance" be taken in an active and not in a Laodicean sense; and if "understanding" be interpreted as at least the beginning of wisdom, we have here qualities which — added to the quick intelligence we may take for granted — should assure the possessor not merely a successful but a useful life.

These are the faculties for which there is a desperate need in seeking the solution of the conundrums of today. The daily papers and the public forums are crowded with debate on questions for which no easy answer is to be found. Yet they are all important. We must answer them. Moreover, the answer must in each case be correct — not an answer which administers a flattering unction to a social sore, but one which will heal or restore the body of society — the real answer, an answer which is not a mere improvisation but will stand the test of time.

How are we to solve the Palestine problem? What are the rights

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of the Arabs? of the Jews? If there is a conflict of rights, how is it to be resolved? Is the solution to be on the level of immediate political expediency? or of the fulfillment of guarantees, whether rightly or wrongly given? or of some higher law of international morality, if one can be defined? What is the relation of this specific issue to the general problem of the displaced and dispossessed Jews of central Europe? Have the Jews a claim to a homeland, a claim to which the conscience of mankind must respond?

How are we to reconcile the principle of non-interference in the domestic affairs of another country with the moral responsibility to succor the oppressed democratic elements in Spain and Argentina? Is our sensitiveness to their need purely moral, or is it mixed with concern at the threat to our own democratic institutions by the survival in these countries of foci of Fascist infection? And is our hesitation to act also based on mixed motives: not merely the principle of non-intervention, but also the desire to avoid religious controversy?

What about the four freedoms, so universally acclaimed when first enunciated in the Atlantic Charter?

Does freedom of worship carry with it corresponding responsibilities? Is it freedom for you as well as for me? Is it freedom not to worship as well as to worship? Has it as corollary the universal and complete separation of Church and State, so that no state interferes with religion and no religious body claims political status or attempts to influence legislation in its supposed interest (either on domestic issues or for or against foreign countries of whose policies it approves or disapproves)? Should there be a clerical party in any country? Should a Church attempt by legislation to impose upon the whole body politic restrictions which belong only to its own code?

What of freedom of speech (including freedom of teaching and freedom of the press)? At what point does freedom become illegitimate, become license? Is there a place for censorship of political utterances, of literary and artistic creation, of the exposition of theories of science, of government, of the family? We recall the attempts to prevent the teaching of evolution in

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Tennessee, the barring of Bertrand Russell from the New York educational system because he was supposed to have advocated free love. We recall, on the other hand, the somewhat peculiar views regarding freedom of the press held by the great press associations. We recall the frequent use of tendentious or misleading headlines, the featuring or the burying of news according to the policy of the paper, the persistent purveying of half-truths by columnists and radio commentators.

What about freedom from fear and freedom from want? These freedoms might seem like legitimate deductions from "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," yet both have been the objects of violent direct attack, as well as of indirect attack through opposition to various legislative measures related to them. In direct attack it is argued that if man is given these freedoms, if he is given "security," he will degenerate like the Romans of the days of bread and circuses; that he will lose incentive, initiative; that pauperization of the masses will inevitably follow. Is the distinction of the WPA that it created a dynasty of shovel-leaners, or that it preserved for artisans and artists a modicum of self-respect? Is there such a thing as the right to work? the right to a fair day's pay for a fair day's work? How is "fair" to be determined? Does the word "exploitation" describe a genuine social ill? Is the actual working of modern industrialized society correctly represented in the sentimental American success dream of "from rags to riches" or "from the log cabin to the White House"? Will freedom from want and freedom from fear deprive the American of an essential element in his birthright or guarantee it to him?

To many of these questions, and the scores of others which any day's reading will bring to mind, we may find ourselves making an immediate and spontaneous answer. The answer may be correct, and it is important that it should be. But we must remember that, from the point of view of "man thinking," why we hold a belief is well-nigh as important as the belief itself. It is important because in the long run we cannot depend on intuition, we have to depend on reason and judgment. We have to exercise those Phi Beta Kappa qualities I have mentioned. We have to be willing,

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indeed resolutely determined, to view all the facts, and prepared to accept the facts at all costs. For one of the most essential things a human being has to learn — if he is to progress from moral adolescence to maturity — is that you can fool yourself but you can't fool with the facts. Sooner or later they will catch up with you, and with the human society for the character of which you are in some degree responsible.

It is true, of course, that even the best of us have our prejudices, our slants, our hunches, our personal equations, our conditioning. Roughly speaking, we are conservatives or liberals (disregarding the small fringe of reactionaries and radicals), with quite a lot of shadings, of course, toward right or left, and with complexities produced by being conservative in one area of conviction and liberal in another. Most people have something of this complexity, when they have lived long enough to have sweetened the abstract rationalism of youth with feeling born of experience, or their passion (if that kind of youth) with the practical sense born of experience. Yet the man or woman of liberal culture will recognize his emotions and be their master, not their slave, refusing to grow excited over every nasty whisper or every shouting headline that flatters his prejudices, "and but in purged judgment trusting neither." We all have our instinctive reactions, but the man or woman of disciplined intelligence, broad view and understanding heart, the ideal Phi Beta Kappa, should gain from his emotional coloration an enrichment of personality and a drive which without impairing his judgment will make him a more effective servant of mankind.

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Are We Politically Adolescent?

William G. Carleton

IT IS not easy to call one's own countrymen politically naïve, especially when one's country has just won two major wars in a single generation and attained a position of outstanding leadership in the world. A person who publicly makes such an observation exposes himself to the charge of being one who likes to startle, to say glib and smart things. However, the evidence that we *are* a superficial and an adolescent people politically continues to mount.

The striking contrast between our power and our political immaturity represents a unique situation. When in the eighteenth century France was the first power in the world; when in the nineteenth century Britain was the first power — the thinkers and peoples of these countries were in the forefront of the political thought of their time. Today the United States is the first power in the world, but her thinkers and her people have not kept pace with the best political and social thought of our time. Nathaniel Peffer has reported how even educated Chinese, Hindus and Koreans, while marveling at America's technical achievements, observe in a patronizing way the backwardness of American social and political thought.

There are some very definite reasons for this lag in American political thinking. Among these are: the influence of evangelical religion on our political mores; the persistence of eighteenth-

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century political conceptions; the simplicity of America's relations to the rest of the world until very recently; the relative ease of American economic and social situations throughout most of American history.

I

Religion in America has for the most part been evangelical, hortatory, apocalyptical. This religious attitude has carried over to temporal affairs and invested politics with an aura of superstition, mysticism and uplift. Political issues are dealt with in terms of "the higher law." In every political campaign, big and little, politicians "stand at Armageddon and battle for the Lord."

No one familiar with public speaking and the conduct of Americans in the mass can be unaware of the moralistic attitude of American audiences. American speakers, especially in the South and West, even if their subjects be zoning ordinances, milk inspection or street cleaning, are expected to deliver "a message." Even today it is a common experience of speakers on social, economic and political subjects to be admonished by dissatisfied listeners for having left God out of the picture.

This carrying over of religious fervor to politics has tended to make American political thinking romantic and unrealistic. It has tended to create a political world dominated by vague sentiments, wishes, dreams and make-believe — a world divorced from actual conditions.

For example, take the American lawyer turned politician. As a lawyer he has become accustomed to taking infinite pains in negotiating contracts, making abstracts, drawing wills and constructing his pleadings. There is no soft thinking here. But let that same lawyer enter the political arena and be called upon to deal with broad economic and political questions, and his thinking and pronouncements degenerate into a strange compound of moral platitudes, empty stereotypes and romantic sentimentalities. If he "lawed" as shoddily as he "politiked," he would not last two days as a practicing attorney. In most cases, however, he suffers no harm as a result of his loose political thinking, be-

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cause his constituents, reared in the tradition of the frontier pulpit pounder, expect their politicians to deliver themselves of "messages" in which evil is put to rout by the forces of righteousness.

This supernaturalistic approach to politics often leads to a curious kind of passivity. Local and state campaigns are frequently waged on the issue of "turning the rascals out," and specific criminal charges of the most serious kind are leveled at the "ins." But when the "ins" are defeated and the "outs" come to power, almost never is anything done about these campaign charges, even though there be real substance behind them. It is enough that good has triumphed over wickedness.

Again, many of our politicians develop the notion that it is sufficient to expose an evil by making a speech; the speech is a kind of vicarious atonement for lack of action. The late Senator William E. Borah, it seems to me, suffered from this political affliction. And from passivity it is but a step to pessimistic fatalism, to the idea that this world is so hopelessly evil that nothing at all can be done by society to better things. Out of this mood springs the conviction that all politics and all politicians are dirty and immoral, a view held by too many Americans today. (This is the very antithesis of the far sounder view which has it that man is a political animal and that there is no morality outside of politics.) Today hundreds of thousands of Americans belong to primitive religious sects which deny the validity of political authority altogether and speak of all government as "a great beast" and a world association of nations as "a harlot." And incidentally, most modern Americans have only to be scratched slightly to expose a lingering half-belief that public affairs are but a working out of divine revelation.

Even our religious modernists are guilty of an extreme and a one-sided view of politics. According to Reinhold Niebuhr, American modernists grossly underrate the pressure of vested economic interests and the part played by man's irrational impulses when they naïvely believe that the mere dissemination of political and economic information and the spread of education will solve our social problems. They make of man a too rational

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being. Thus the religious modernist becomes as politically immature as the religious fundamentalist, but for different reasons.

II

American political thinking is still essentially of the eighteenth century. We are still thinking in terms of the compact theory and of natural rights. We have a written constitution, and this has been the most important political fact in our historical experience. Debate on public questions has largely revolved about questions of constitutionality rather than questions of social desirability. Our approach to politics is still in great part legal, formal, structural and mechanical. We still resist the functional approach; we still resent economic and social realism. We are Newtonian rather than Darwinian; we still think on the side of fixity rather than on the side of relativity and evolutionary change. We have made great strides toward political and social realism since the Great Depression, but the substratum of our political thinking continues to be of the eighteenth century.

A striking example of our faith in political mechanices occurs almost every time we have a change in the presidency. Almost invariably a new president announces that he believes in separation of powers, and that he will keep "hands off" Congress. This announcement is always welcomed by the people and applauded by the politicians and the press. But within a few months the new president learns, the hard way, about the facts of political life; it is not long before the inescapable realities of social politics beat about his head and force him into dynamic leadership.

At the opening of the twentieth century, when the economic and social problems of an industrial society had become so cumulative and acute that they could no longer be ignored, our first impulse was not to solve those problems in terms of their economic and social content, but to alter the mechanics of our mechanical structure. Hence the emphasis of the progressive movement on direct primaries, the popular election of United States senators, the initiative, the referendum, the recall. Lincoln Steffens has pointed out how our big cities persistently put their faith in repeated "reform" techniques, which invariably mis-

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carry, while the fundamental economic and social conditions that produce the boss and city machine are ignored.

Another example of our faith in political mechanisms may be found in the great pother raised by civil service reform back in the 1880's. There was an almost childlike belief that civil service reform would solve our pressing public questions. This belief was held not only by the rank and file of our people, but also by men like E. L. Godkin and Andrew D. White, who should have known better.

From faith in civil service reform it was not a long jump to faith in the administrative "expert." Faith in the administrative expert was to the 1920's and 1930's what faith in civil service reform had once been. The high priests of this new dispensation were the political scientists themselves. It was much easier and much more in line with our political thinking to ignore social forces and to call in the administrative experts, than to face squarely the pressing problems of American industrial society. And from faith in the administrative expert it is but a very short step to a belief that people can be maneuvered and manipulated by propaganda techniques — regardless of the fundamental economic and social forces at work.

That we still emphasize the legal approach to politics is attested by the fact that the great bulk of our politicians are lawyers. Constituencies in foreign countries elect to public office far more than we do manufacturers, bankers, labor leaders, physicians, editors, teachers and college professors — men who spend their lives living or thinking about social or economic realities rather than legal forms. Regular readers of the *Congressional Record* doubtless have been amused by the way our law makers pounce upon a little legal point and pick it to pieces, while leaving the larger economic implications of legislation to perfunctory and unrealistic examination. And only a people with a rather pathetic faith in legal forms could have in all seriousness voted in the Eighteenth Amendment and the Volstead Act!

The persistence of the compact theory of government is evident today in our faith in the United Nations, based as it is on the contractual concept. On the other hand, Americans seri-

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ously underrate the functional approach to world organization, such as the Communist International, which still exists in fact if not in form. We Americans are likely to think of this as a mere instrument of Soviet imperialism, rather than as the possible nucleus of a future federated world state. In this connection it would be well for us to recall the making of national states: how the bourgeoisie in the various communes and feudal provinces joined hands to create the national states of Western Europe; how the business men and big planters of our own thirteen original states joined hands to create and ratify the Constitution of 1787, and to make possible its successful operation during the critical first decade of its existence. Legal forms were not enough; behind those legal forms there had to be coordinated social and economic drives to stimulate effective functional development. We would be discussing American foreign policy more realistically today if we examined the kind of class support we are getting or are likely to get in the various countries of the world.

Indeed, the naïve faith of Americans in mere political machinery is best illustrated today by the enormous interest Americans take in the mechanical structure of the United Nations — while taking almost none in such questions as how power politics would operate inside a successful world organization (as it now operates inside national governments); how ideological differences could be composed; how such an organization could keep the peace, and still not become an instrument for freezing the status quo and preventing necessary change.

III

If there ever existed that "happy land without a foreign policy" it was the United States during the major part of its history. Of course, the United States had a definite foreign policy from the time of Washington's administration down to the Spanish-American War — a policy of isolation or American continentalism — but, except for the very early years of the Republic and for the Civil War period, this policy required of our people and our leaders little of the intelligence, information, astuteness and agility required of European powers in the conduct of their

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foreign relations. Favorable conditions and circumstances over a long period of time allowed the United States to pursue so simple and easy-going a policy. No North American balance of power developed because the United States came to dominate the continent. And it so happened, as Parker Thomas Moon has pointed out, that the early and middle history of the Republic coincided with the period of European non-aggression and non-expansion in Asia, Africa and the Western Hemisphere — the relatively quiet period *after* mercantilistic imperialism and *before* the rise of industrial or finance imperialism.

With few exceptions, then, we have never until recently had to face really difficult long-term questions of foreign policy. This freedom from vital worry about our foreign policy has been responsible for our adolescent notions about international relations. Except for an occasional glimpse of reality (for instance, "God takes care of children, fools, drunkards and the United States of America") we came to ascribe our security and freedom from wars to our own strength and wisdom, to our own intellectual and moral superiority. Even today we do not understand the nature of the European or world balance of power, and naïvely believe that a world organization to keep the peace will somehow banish this wicked system, rather than canalize it into political and legal channels. Jacques Barzun has told us how once upon a time he innocently asked a group of Americans what politics could be about if not power, and how, as a result, he was stared at as if he had proposed polygamy.

Misunderstanding the nature of power politics, we have now entered actively upon the world scene with mellifluous platitudes, sermonic exhortations and cosmic creeds. And we do little to bring these high-sounding generalizations down to earth and give them concrete application. The Fourteen Points and the Atlantic Charter are cases in point. Then when these necessarily fail in the practical world of affairs we recoil into a kind of hurt self-righteousness.

More recently we have been guilty of an equally adolescent trait. In the Pacific our people have demanded a unilateral policy favorable to us, but in Poland and the Balkans our people

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have demanded of Russia a policy of universalism. In our sphere we favored nationalism; in the Russian sphere we favored internationalism.

IV

Throughout most of our history, America's internal problems have been relatively simple. We have been free of the complex and pressing situations confronting Europe. Here was a vast continent rich in natural resources, with abundant land, with a small population. Few feudal left-overs complicated life. No dead hand reached out from the past to perpetuate parasitic vested interests and embitter social relations — at least not to the degree common to Europe. Class lines were fluid and blurred. The ever-present frontier provided a safety valve and a way of escape from the serious problems that did arise. Men too often did not have to sit down and think their own way through difficulties; instead, they could simply evade them.

We know now that the differences between Europe and America were never differences in kind; they were only differences in degree. We know also that the differences between Europe and America are getting narrower all the time and that today the problems of an industrial society are much the same on both sides of the Atlantic. The days of immunity from hard problems and tough thinking are gone forever. But the heritage of easy-going political thinking, inherited from the days when Americans could afford to wage a heated presidential election on the question of whether or not the tariff should be raised or lowered a few notches, survives to this day.

The democratic tradition, too, has been responsible in part for our reluctance to discuss political questions in realistic terms. Back in the early days of the Republic, before universal suffrage and the democratic dogma, our statesmen debated questions in a way that aided one's understanding of society. Hamilton, Jefferson, Madison, John Adams, John Taylor of Carolina spoke in terms of political actualities; they discussed the real nature and basis of political power; they publicly acknowledged the decisive importance in politics of property interests, economic

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interests, group interests and class interests. But by about 1840 the methods of Jacksonian democracy had progressed so far in politics that the Whigs, representatives of the conservative interests, dared not say in public what they actually thought — that property should rule in society. Where the Federalists dealt in actualities and candidly asserted their convictions, the Whigs were compelled to employ subterfuges and to talk as if they loved the common man. When the conservative party of the country thus dispensed with actual analysis and hard thinking, and no longer challenged the liberal party of the country to meet it on real grounds, political thinking in both parties became flabby and sentimental. Platitudes, stereotypes and wise-cracks took the place of realistic thinking. The hoop-la election of 1840 set the pattern of all subsequent political campaigning in this country.

The relative simplicity of our problems, then, and the necessity of couching even these in easily acceptable and superficial terms, have produced a naïve political faith. The essence of this faith is a belief in the identity of group interests and the American conception of the general welfare or the common good. In America "the general welfare" becomes a mystical concept. It is thought of as having a distinct and independent existence, rather than as the end result of a rough compromising of group interests. Once in a while, of course, devils in the form of "Wall Street" or "economic royalists" or labor unions arise to endanger "the general welfare." But in the end these devils are exorcised.

Democracy is thought of as ministering directly to "the general welfare," not as the mediating process whereby all group interests are balanced. Pressure groups are thought to be threats to "the general welfare," rather than the normal and natural way people have always expressed themselves in politics. A sure bet to win applause from an American audience is to assail "pressure groups." It scarcely ever occurs to an American that the difference between democracy and dictatorship consists in this: in a democracy all groups are invited to become articulate and active, and a method is provided for balancing their differences; in a dictatorship a few pressure groups capture the government, and

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ignore, silence and even persecute other pressure groups. The idea that that society is most democratic which has the greatest number of articulate and active pressure groups usually comes as a distinct surprise to Americans.

Out of this mystical notion of "the general welfare" has come a rejection not only of Marxism, but of that whole concept of the class and group struggle which most of the founding fathers (particularly James Madison) understood so well. Perhaps it is more correct to say that Americans ignore Marxism than that they reject it. One cannot reject something unless he has thought about it, and most Americans have simply never given Marxism a passing thought. The average American even shies away from using the term "socialist." Out of this ignorance of Marxism comes the greatest danger to American cooperation and leadership in the world today. It is now plain for all to see that the twentieth century is the century of the socialist revolution. But Americans do not yet see this, because for them Marxism is something that either does not exist or must be ignored, or, at the least, played down.

Out of this basic misunderstanding comes a whole host of misconceptions. Fascism is thought of as an aberration, not as a counter-revolution to socialism. Socialists and Communists are put in the same boat and equally damned. The triumph of middle-class democracy in Europe is still believed possible. The political conflict in Europe today is believed to be between middle-class democracy and socialism, rather than between moderate socialism and extreme socialism or communism. It is actually believed that socialism can be checked by America's refusal of loans and credits to socialist governments, whereas such a course is more likely to drive the peoples of Europe toward communism. Harry Truman and Jimmy Byrnes have every day to do business with foreign statesmen whose basic political philosophy is either "revisionist" or "orthodox" Marxism, but it is doubtful if either Truman or Byrnes has ever in his life given one serious thought to the Marxian philosophy. The Marxists understand our basic point of view, which they characterize as "bourgeois," but we do not understand theirs. This is not to say that all American states-

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men should embrace Marxism, but it is to say that American statesmen of the mid-twentieth century who fail to understand Marxism do so at their own and their country's peril.

V

America today has no first class theoretical thinkers in politics. Even the learned journals have until recently dealt almost exclusively with the legalistic, the scholastic, the structural approach to politics; they have resisted the dynamic, the social, the functional approach.

Even now, in the midst of a decided trend toward collectivism, at about the dead center of a century which will be known as the century of the socialist revolution, America has no socialist thinkers of first rank — one is tempted to say that America has no socialist thinkers at all. For a half century the British Fabian intellectuals have been preparing for the present by anticipating and rationalizing the future, but we have in America no comparable group of thinkers. Our political intellectuals have simply abdicated their chief function. For what in the name of heaven is a political intellectual good for, if not to anticipate and rationalize the future?

If we Americans want to learn about the revolution of our day we may, to be sure, read something about it in American periodicals, but the articles are invariably written by Europeans — a Francis Williams, a G. D. H. Cole, a Julian Huxley or a Harold Laski. And it is significant that the most pretentious book by America's most famous publicist of the mid-twentieth century, *An Inquiry into the Principles of the Good Society* by Walter Lippmann, is an anachronistic and indefensible identification of freedom with the free market, long since departed from large parts of the world and from many areas of American economic life.

American political thought, saturated as it is with eighteenth century rationales and formalisms, has done next to nothing in exploring the part played by the irrational in politics and human conduct. This has been a field left almost entirely to the Europeans — to Stendhal, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, Bergson, Freud,

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Pareto, Sorel, Thomas Mann and a host of others. Now as Max Lerner has pointed out, there is an enormous difference between the recognition of the role of the irrational and the glorification of it. And if, as Lerner believes, the necessary task of our age is to discover a resolution between the role of the irrational and the demands of social rationality, then we Americans have certainly shirked our intellectual responsibilities.

VI

We are, to be sure, on our way to greater political maturity. Our scholarly journals in political science contain more and more articles that integrate politics with business, agriculture, labor. In the field of history, disciples of Turner and Beard are busy analyzing the bases of sectional and class conflict.

We must, however, be careful not to over-emphasize these gains. Our political scientists and their learned journals still stress constitutional, legal, structural, administrative problems. Most of our historians still refuse to act on the Turner or Beard concepts, however much they may accept them in theory. A glance at a list of American historical publications in any given year will show that Americans who write history still prefer political narrative, personal history, biography. As Manning J. Dauer has pointed out, so little actual spade work has been done — there has been in fact so little collecting of election returns down through townships, wards and precincts, and so little analyzing of these against economic and social backgrounds — that when young Arthur M. Schlesinger announced that Jacksonian democracy was primarily Eastern, urban and proletarian rather than the product of the frontier, American historians did not know whether Schlesinger was right or wrong!

Now if this confusion exists among the scholars, what shall we say of the laity? For the laity, these functional ideas have scarcely penetrated at all. The great majority of our practical politicians and ordinary citizens still operate within a framework of political mores utterly separated from today's economic and social realities. For instance, the stock in trade of a political conservative consists of moth-eaten stereotypes like "eternal verities"; "the

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sanctity of the Constitution"; "that government is best which governs least"; "you cannot by legislation repeal the law of supply and demand"; and so forth. The stock in trade of a political liberal continues to be humanitarian uplift.

We are, of course, being educated — scholars and laity alike — by the inexorable flow of events: two world wars and their consequences; the Great Depression of the 1930's; the hard realities of contemporary foreign politics; the tide of anti-imperialist revolt and socialist revolution in Asia and Europe. But are we being educated rapidly enough to deal intelligently with the world in which we are now a leader?

The most important race in the world today is the race between American political education and catastrophe.

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Epitaph of War

Perry Wolff

SAMREE, BELGIUM

Past my window lies a cultured lawn
  Tinted with midwinter dew,
A brace of spaniels flush a faun —
  Morning's politely askew.

O once this sun lay on a field
  Where twice the dew was red,
And warmed the weeds where lay concealed
  Three who fought the dead.

The first, a dancer, lacked a tune,
  The shells had burst his ears,
And what is rhythm by the moon
  And silence by the spheres?

The second sucked a clod of mud
  And watched the Schmeisser spout,
And when the bullet shook his blood
  He could not cast it out.

Twice the dew and two the deaths,
  The third retained his eyes,
And they have passed, the noble breaths,
  The dedicative sighs.

I never heard of Belgian land,
  My politics are weak,
I feel the sunlight on my hand
  The spider on my cheek.

◎ During World War II PERRY WOLFF was a rifleman with the Eighty-fourth Division. Since his discharge he has been doing free-lance writing for radio.

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SEVEN SONNETS

I

For the Victorious Poets

O do not speak again of misplaced spring
Or days when roses bathed in vulgar red,
Or of contemplative field larks who sing
Remembrances to our unhearing dead.
You cannot dare for phrases "not in vain,"
Or "final sacrifice" or "not for long,"
There are no social hopes among the slain,
The larks have sung an idiotic song.

Do not speak, do not talk, no words, no sighs,
Let silence be the epitaph of war,
A silence that is pressed on autumn skies
By winds that bear the living spore:
A quiet that obscures a useless glow,
For it is truth to say, "I do not know."

II

For My Outfit

This is a thin, discordant counterpoint
To oratory and the martial strain,
A marching file is weaving out of joint
And greasy clouds are spilling steady rain
On rifles pointed down, on standards cased,
On hopes of home that lie in muted throats
As tenuous ideals become erased
By swamps and fascists wearing khaki coats.

We are the tutored mob, the infantry,
Redeemers of some words we vaguely know,
Who soon shall find the sharp philosophy:
That moment when a whistle's final blow
Shall signal the deploy and we disperse
Alone, and tangent to the universe.

III

La Roche, Belgium

These dead are caught in booby-traps
Awaiting chemical reform,
Disinterested, in shrouding wraps,
They've lost concern for keeping warm.
They gave too much to beat the cold,
Though it was given honor-free;

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There's sometime use for growing old,
I'll give my right leg to the knee.

O commandant, come lead your men,
Lay down your decorating pen,
To evade the cold, which wound is best?
A jointless arm? A sucking chest?
We'd die, but death is suspect here,
Your corpse has snow within its ear.

IV

Prummern, Germany

Cannoneer, rifleman, mortarman dead,
What are the thoughts you retain in your head?
What are the hopes that were caught in your throat
As the shrapnel prepared a red burial coat?
You are the loser, the battles are won,
The glories are faded, the writers are gone,
Speak it in silence and ask it in ruth,
Though the word is unheard, the word is first truth.

All sand and starlight, wind and cloud,
Come take the man who made the crowd,
Answer him with swaddling shroud,
And rot the face that lies mud-masked
To mute the question yet unasked —
O his was flesh far over-tasked.

V

Valuation

Yes, it is fine to die like Socrates,
With Grecian students weeping in your cell,
Dispensing grace for all posterities,
Philosophizing on the state of Hell;
Or if the Marys guard the sepulcher
Your name is meant for neon set in chrome
And there will be the Easter songs and myrrh,
And there are always candles burned in Rome.

But what if the Schmeisser behind the concrete
Tears out an eye and riddles both feet?
What of a death in disputed terrain —
Twenty-three days that you rot in the rain?
Better. . . . The burst is sometimes sure and quick;
The Cross is too slow, the hemlock too thick.

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VI

Evacuation Train, Hannover Station

Sons of the Queen, returning from the wars,
Filled sick with dysentery, steel, and hate,
Come watch the locomotive punctuate
The cultured sky that rests upon your sores.
Watch, in the street the talking Germans fuss
At selling lentils or dissecting dreams,
Or picking used cigars from gutter streams:
They are inventors of the calculus.

Physics is not impressed by bravery,
A bullet's catenary will not skew
Through honest flesh without a residue
Of blood and pain and shackling misery:
There is your impotence, there in the street,
They are the weavers of your shrouding sheet.

VII

I Cannot Pay for Eggs

In the morning, in the morning,
When the whores are off the streets,
From the bedroom we are watching
Drudges changing last night's sheets.
We have talked of brave tomorrows,
Crosby leading to the Host,
Ellington for true love's sorrows,
While we've smeared the buttered toast.

Yet before breakfast make the choice —
Society demands our voice,
Let us spin the five franc coin
To see which dogma we shall join:
Heads is Marx and tails is Freud,
The milled edge is the Hebrew's void.

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Germany: Test Tube of Peace

Ross N. Berkes

WE ARE now entering the second year of one of the most difficult and challenging experiments in world affairs — the Four-Power administration of defeated Germany. To many observers it is a near miracle that quadripartite rule still lives. Others have long maintained that it has been nothing but a fiction from the beginning, since the administration of Germany is yet basically zonal, and since agreed policies emanating from the Control Council in Berlin have hardly begun to tackle the great and pressing issues of the German problem. Whatever the answer, it is probably premature to evaluate the over-all success or failure of this unique scheme for the German occupation, although much might certainly be said to clear the road toward a truer appreciation.

I. QUADRIPARTITE CONTROL

It would seem imperative that one's judgment of the German occupation should be based on a clear idea of the character and scope of quadripartite rule. Our investigation might well begin here. Four-Power machinery was established in Berlin in August of 1945, and charged with carrying out the German aspects of the Potsdam Agreement of the same month. Three premises underlie the development of the control machinery. (1) The zonal commanders-in-chief are responsible to their home governments for the administration of their zone. (2) Three of the zonal commanders-in-chief, through their governments, are committed to

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the execution of the German provisions of the Potsdam Agreement. (3) The control machinery to be established is, as a consequence of the first premise, essentially a diplomatic body.

The machinery subsequently set up was launched under peculiar handicaps, partly as a result of the potential incompatibility of the first two premises. To make matters more difficult, France, although one of the four occupying powers and consequently one-fourth of the control machinery, was neither present at, committed to, nor very sympathetic with the second premise — Potsdam. One might, and many do, question the sincerity of one or another of the Big Three in carrying out the terms of the Potsdam Agreement. Also, one might, and many do, question the desirability of their being carried out. Such question marks — coupled with a highly sensitive and negative attitude on the part of France, the impotence of the Control Authority in the face of the opposition of any one of the Big Four, and finally, the existence of legitimate disputes as to the interpretation or priority of Potsdam terms — have constituted a combination of circumstances which would try the patience of Job.

Despite these impediments, and almost despite the increasing divergencies of policy among the Big Four, the control machinery centered in Berlin has been active and productive for nearly a year. Procrastination in tackling the large political and economic issues of Germany, or in carrying out the basic provisions of the Potsdam Agreement, tends to minimize one of the most constructive and significant attributes of the Allied Control Authority: the fact of intensive daily contact and exchange on a staff level for the purpose of arriving at joint policies. The "uncooperative Russians" do not seem to exist on the committee and directorate levels in Berlin, any more than they do on analogous levels in the United Nations. On more than one occasion in the experience of the author, Russian representatives have shown an admirable talent for sincere, informed leadership in solving acute problems of policy in the Allied Control Authority. High policy imponderables undoubtedly play a more significant part in the over-all picture, yet one is constantly intrigued by the actuality and potentiality of cooperation, based on mutual respect and no

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little patience and tolerance, which are in evidence in the committee rooms of the Allied Control Authority. There are always examples of stubborn, almost intransigent non-cooperation, but Russia has been far from monopolizing the area of disharmony. The point to be emphasized, at any rate, is that after a full and at times dramatic year of working together on one of the greatest challenges to Allied cooperation that exists today, perhaps the Great Powers are beginning to learn how to get along, to understand and tolerate, and to make the concessions and compromises which are essential to success in Berlin as well as elsewhere.

In support of such optimism, cautious as it must be, one notes the recent announcement from Berlin on October 2, 1946, that Russia has finally consented to the establishment of a Four-Power commission to investigate the extent of German industrial disarmament in all four zones. After such a bitter history of Allied charges and countercharges, blatant refusals and counterrefusals, the incipient establishment of such a commission borders on the realm of a major victory for cooperation.

On only two occasions has failure, in a positive sense, threatened to doom quadripartite machinery. The first time occurred in the fall of 1945, when the French objection to the creation of centralized Germany administrative agencies led to the opening of negotiations among the other three powers for the carrying out of this Potsdam policy. Astute Soviet tact first rose up to shelve the project, and blunt British objections finally broke the bubble before it was underway.

The second occasion is yet in the process of development, and involves the German federation plans, which have been tentatively but persistently suggested by responsible British and American officials since early this summer. Such plans were reaffirmed by Secretary Byrnes in his October 3 address to the American Club in Paris. Whether Secretary Byrnes intended to clarify or to rectify a more confusing passage on the subject in his Stuttgart speech is difficult to ascertain. In any case, the later speech appeared as a deliberate bid for French cooperation, since the French have always stressed federalization.

The plans in themselves do not constitute a threat, but there

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is an ominous ring to the implication of an aggressive Anglo-American stand in favor of political decentralization which tolerates no veto from Russia. The fact that the Soviet is leaning toward a centralized German regime, as indicated by Molotov in his vigorous condemnation of federalization on July 10, may force a showdown that could substantially end quadripartite administration.

It would seem a poor victory to achieve a German federation comprising the three western zones at the expense of parting company with Russia in Germany and with the large agricultural and industrial Russian zone. To keep the issue in deadlock and to continue indefinitely such a political vacuum might seem to many an even poorer victory, especially if one envisages the threat of Soviet Communist domination of all Germany rather than merely of the Russian zone. Such a vital question deserves the wisdom of caution.

To most, it would be tragic to the hopes for world peace to divide Germany along a "two-world" front; yet one British observer has recently so proposed, arguing rather dangerously and shortsightedly in the *World Today* that this solution would substantially end the German menace. Such a conclusion has the merit of simple logic, provided every interested party is perpetually satisfied with the partition (which seems rather unlikely), but it fails to take into account the most vital aspect of the so-called "German problem": the political imperative of continuing Great Power cooperation. The collapse today of quadripartite cooperation in Germany is a far greater threat to world peace than the hypothetical resurrection tomorrow of the German menace with all its brutal might.

II. NATIONAL INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES

It would be beyond the limits of these pages even to trace the lines of policy as they emerge and diverge among the Big Four in Germany. It might be profitable, however, to attempt an identification of the basic forces behind the policies of the four powers as they relate to Germany, for it is through an understanding of national fears and hopes, attitudes and objectives, that policies

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or actions become fully intelligible. With this in mind, the Big Four might be surveyed as follows:

France. To the French, perhaps more than to any other nationality, the word "Germany" spells "danger" — potential and inanimate, or actual and menacing. Their dilemma is to guarantee a weak Germany without hurting the rest of Europe and themselves as well, but in the last analysis they will make practically any sacrifice that contributes toward the continued impotence of Germany. It is from this approach that subsequent rationalization enters the development of French policies. Georges Bidault is neither the first nor the last to make it quite clear that "From the French point of view, the German question is first of all a problem of security." To anyone with sympathy for France and the slightest exposure to European history, France's emphasis is certainly comprehensible. There is danger in obsession, however, and in a narrow, shortsighted interpretation of the elements of security.

Germany is also a problem of national prestige to France. It is perhaps unjust to say that France was, and might still be, completely unprepared to assume its role as one of the four occupying powers, but a more generous statement might err on the side of gratuitousness. France remains unchallenged as a great nation and a deserving ally, but it is not today, in the year 1946, a great power, and all the sentiments one can so easily marshal do not alter the situation.

France has been desperately crippled at the hands of Germany; it can only discharge its responsibilities as an occupying power with difficulty, outside help, sacrifice and no little reluctance. Beginning relatively unequipped, with the stubbornness of single purpose coloring its every view, receiving its slice of German territory and share of joint responsibility as an afterthought of the Big Three, and finally being excluded completely from the deliberations and decisions of Potsdam — such an array of misfortune and misadventure has made France "difficult," to say the least.

Great Britain. The British do not share France's primary motivations of security and prestige. But as with France, there is

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a dual motivation behind British policy in Germany. The British want a strong Germany, as contrasted with the weak Germany desired by France. They are not blind to the potentiality of yet another (or the same) German menace, but never having been invaded or occupied by German troops, the British tend to read the lessons of history from a different text. History as cause and effect is a fickle ally. To France, the lesson of the last peace was the failure to keep Germany down. To Great Britain, the lesson was the failure to help Germany up. The result was the same — the ugly emergence of a ruthless, violent, bandit German state. Both allies are intent that this does not happen again, but each sees in the other's attitude the straight, broad highway to the reincarnation of a devil-Germany.

In a sense, then, Britain is also concerned with security, but it is with the security which follows a prosperous, and therefore contented, Germany. In occupying the Ruhr, the British have been particularly alarmed about the economic future of Germany. They see the restrictive economic policies laid down by the Allied Control Authority last March as beckoning disaster. To chain Germany to a standard of living prospect no better than that which bred national socialism (and communism) in the depths of depression means to the British an open invitation to neo-fascism or its equally dangerous, and possibly more dangerous, alternative — communism. Firmly convinced by self-example of the close correlation between commercial prosperity and a peace-loving foreign policy, the British have faith in their anti-dote, and none in that of the French, which they feel was tried before with such disastrous results.

The other facet to Britain's attitude is even more telling: a deep-seated fear of Russia. Perhaps it is a fear of communism, or a mixture of both. In any case, the presumed designs of communistic Russia are almost as great a nightmare to the British as the presumed designs of nationalistic Germany are to the French. The existence of this fear has been embarrassingly present even in quadripartite committee meetings of the Allied Control Authority. There are natural grounds for harmony between these two basic premises of British policy in Germany. A strong,

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prosperous Germany is a potential bulwark against Russia and/or communism.

But these may be unnatural times, for we are witnessing the possible abandonment by the British of policies emanating from their first premise in favor of policies emanating from their second. If the two are no longer compatible, it is because Russia may be interested in a relatively strong, centralized Germany under Russian or communist influence. Nationalism and communism may be novel bedfellows, but if they are joining forces in Germany, the British may ultimately desire to attack the latter by crippling the former. One cannot honestly charge Bevin's federation plans with such motivation, but evolving British policy tends to be directed toward such eventualities. If so, the French will have their triumph, even though it be a Pyrrhic victory, in gaining reluctant and circumstantial British support for their German aspirations.

United States. The Americans entered Germany almost incredibly equipped to tackle the German problem. Apart from JCS 1067, our planning was long-range and basically conservative. We visualized Germany as a political and economic whole, and our point of view was closer to that of the British than to that of the French. We wanted to get Germany on its feet again, but were rather uniquely sold on three policies: denazification, re-education and decartelization. We were the aspiring amateurs acutely conscious of our mission and its attendant responsibilities. We set the pace in the Allied Control Authority, and deluged the other three delegations with more proposals during the first few months than all of the rest of them combined. Potsdam seemed to make good sense to the Americans at the time, and it was only toward the winter of 1945–46 that the Washington battle over Germany made itself felt in the U. S. group in Berlin. The internecine struggle which ensued may still be active, though somewhat abated because of the pressing necessity for practical compromises in the face of increasing problems of quadripartite administration.

Basically, however, it is perhaps valid to state that the American approach to the German problem has been dominated by the

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challenge of leading Germany into the paths of reform through re-education. To the French this would probably appear a hopeless task. To the British it would probably appear a self-correcting matter, once German commerce and industry were revived. To the Russians it would possibly appear a threat of anti-Communist indoctrination, but otherwise a rather impotent weapon.

Beyond the pillar of reform, our German policies tended to rest upon one other working principle: cooperation with Russia, to a degree sufficient to disarm Russian suspicions of a Western Bloc. In this we were sincere and have leaned far on more than one occasion. It has been a fruitful principle, and on the whole has probably done more to keep the Control Authority alive and working than any other single attribute.

The era of an emphasis on patient cooperation with Russia, however, is quite apparently over for the while — in Germany as well as elsewhere, although the apparentness of this change is still not quite so glaring in Berlin as the acrimonious Paris Conference debates would indicate. Russia may have forced the beginning of the change late last spring by her sudden obstinacy over treating Germany as an economic whole. In any case, our substantial alignment with the British at Paris may have marked the end of a hopeful era, and the beginning of the end of quadripartite machinery for Germany.

Russia. Churchill's well-quoted description of Soviet foreign policy as "riddle wrapped up in a mystery inside an enigma" may be more picturesque than helpful, but the question mark has a great deal of use by the student of Russian objectives. Two statements made by Stalin on separate occasions in late 1942 are important clues to certain aspects of the Soviet point of view. The first appeared in his speech on November 6, and significantly indicated that

> It is not our aim to destroy Germany, for it is impossible to destroy Germany, just as it is impossible to destroy Russia, but the Hitlerite State can and should be destroyed, and our first task, in fact, is to destroy the Hitlerite State and its inspirers.

The second statement appeared less than three weeks later,

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and made explicit at least one implication of the remark of November 6:

> It would be mad to identify the Hitler clique with the German people and the German State. History proves that Hitlers come and go but the German State and the German people remain.

As wartime propaganda, such statements undoubtedly had some value. Probably they would have been even more effective had they emanated from the lips of spokesmen of the Western powers, although they would likely have boomeranged later. From Stalin, such a point of view indicated interesting possibilities which are not being abandoned. The Russians undoubtedly view Germany as a potential pawn to be treated well or badly, depending upon the existence and success of rivalry from the other three occupying powers — particularly from Britain and to a lesser extent from the United States.

Russia would probably do almost anything to prevent the emergence of a strong anti-Communist Germany, and the Soviet has long been prepared with formidable antidotes, such as the League of German Officers, a slate of German candidates for possible national office, and a well-organized if numerically inferior German Communist Party. Russia cannot afford to leave Germany, whether or not the others do, at the present time or in the near future, without risking the emergence of a British or Anglo-American pawn in Germany. Thus the Byrnes draft of a Four-Power guarantee for the disarmament of Germany is anathema. The Anglo-American project for an eleven- or twelve-state decentralized German federation could be equally perilous; for decentralization could effectively neutralize Russian influence, and the establishment of federal government would force the withdrawal of occupation troops.

Russia has two choices in Germany as long as she is convinced that Great Britain and the United States are arraying themselves against her. The first is to stand on the platform of Stalin's 1942 statements and wave the banner of German nationalism, in a desperate attempt to rally the political forces of Germany as a whole to the Communist camp. Such a campaign is already

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emerging, for there have been indications of Communist leadership in the revival of German nationalism. Recently-announced Anglo-American projects for a loose federation would play into the hands of Russia.

The second alternative is based upon the failure of the first. Rather than risk a German federation, with an emphasis on decentralization and states' rights, Russia may force the breakup of Germany by developing the Russian zone in complete and "permanent" isolation from the political and economic structure of the rest of Germany. This would mean a "two-world" Germany, with a weak and struggling German federation in the west looking longingly to the Russian zone and lured to the Communist camp by the hope of national unity and strength.

When Secretary Byrnes delivered his Stuttgart speech on September 6, he rendered at least one singular and possibly far-reaching accomplishment: the spiking of Russia's first alternative. For by reopening the issue of Poland's western border, he forced Russia to choose between Germany and Poland. Ten days later, when Molotov told the world that Russia would back the status quo, German nationalism began seeking elsewhere for its champion. The surprising September election returns from the Russian zone might appear to constitute a brilliant victory for the Byrnes strategy, but it is a comfortless triumph if it leads to the entrenchment of Russia's second alternative — a "two-world" Germany.

III. CONCLUSIONS

There is some desperation and no little pessimism in the arguments and observations discussed above. We are in danger of losing the peace because we are failing to solve the most important problem of the German occupation — Russian cooperation. It is not within the scope of this paper to assign the blame for this emergent and disturbing reality, but certainly the United States must be given no little credit for having tried, and tried a great deal harder than any of the other three to solve this problem. There were times when the author felt convinced that Russia was also doing its share, and even today one looks with more

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confidence on the future from inside the Allied Control Authority building in Berlin than from Paris, Washington, London or Moscow.

Germany's future, and with it the security of France and the rest of Europe, depends far less today on the emergence of one or another occupation policy than the security-minded French, the prosperity-minded British, the reform-minded Americans, or the suspicion-minded Russians are apt to believe. As important as it undoubtedly is, the answer to the question of what to do with Germany must be preceded by the answer to the question of how to continue quadripartite cooperation in Germany. Without the latter solution we will have no real or adequate choices for the former.

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Emerson's Pragmatic Mood

Eduard C. Lindeman

The one condition coupled with the gift of truth is its use. That man shall be learned who reduceth his learning to practise.

—RALPH WALDO EMERSON,
"The Method of Nature"

RALPH Waldo Emerson was a product of the Enlightenment. His native reserve aside, he might easily have joined in the battle-cry of the Encyclopedists, "Ecrasez l'infâme." Because he was thus nourished by that short but luminous space of the late eighteenth century he will live again in every succeeding age of enlightenment. Wherever fresh groups of "encyclopedists" gather for the purpose of criticizing a decaying culture and of projecting ideas suited to a new order, there Emerson will be found.

Emerson fought for the very ends which gave the Enlightenment its luster, and he fought against those evils which gave moral meaning to the struggle for a more rational world. *Pro:* reason, sentiment, natural law, humanity, moral law and perfectibility. *Contra:* superstition, hypocrisy, institutionalism, traditionalism and senseless mummery. Had he been set adrift by some perversity of time in the eighteenth century, he would surely have found his way to that "little backstairs door that for any age serves as the secret entrance-way to knowledge." And had he lived in our time, "it is certain that he would understand our current perplexities, be somehow on the right side (whatever that side is) and say clearer and wiser things than most of us are within years and miles of being able to say."

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Emerson's place in the history of transcendental thought is as secure as that of Kant and Schelling. His transcendentalism was not, however, derived from these German sources nor did he use it for the same ends. It has often been claimed that Emerson owed his mysticism primarily to Oriental metaphysics, but this I seriously doubt. He utilized transcendentalism mainly as an instrument of cultural criticism. Confronted with an age on the threshold of unprecedented economic expansion, an age excited over the applications of science to invention and an age tempted to endow material progress with superior values, he, Emerson, sensing the dangers ahead, accepted the role of critic and prophet.

How was this imminent materialism to be challenged? Obviously, by the method which he was to use so frequently in other dilemmas — that of polarization. The patent antithesis for the material is the spiritual or, perhaps, the ideal. That which is transcendental is not necessarily that which is supernatural, superrational or superhuman but rather that which lies outside of and above ordinary experience. Emerson was not so much opposed to material progress as aware of the consequences which might befall our civilization if this form of progress were not matched by a similar advance in the sphere of ideals and morals. In any case, this side of Emerson, his transcendentalism, served him well as critic: when viewed in this light it need not stand as a barrier to the understanding of his other vein, his essential pragmatism.

If consideration of these two seemingly diverse and conflicting elements in Emerson's character point to a fundamental duality in his character, this I am ready to admit. I do not presume to know the name and the nature of those inner conflicts which disturbed Emerson's life and which furnished him with what he himself thought to be his daemonic temperament. Like many another genius (as distinguished from fanatic) he found himself involved in distressing contradictions — so much so, in fact, that he sought to make a virtue of inconsistency. His most ardent hope for lasting fame was focused upon his conception of himself as poet, but he became a writer of sublime prose. He respected men of action, but he was physically shy, awkward and inept. He ad-

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mired persons capable of deep feeling, even of physical attractiveness, but he remained cold, bereft of animal warmth. He could write of friendship in terms of emotional grandeur, but human association "was a thing to be used sparingly, with caution, and for purposes ulterior to itself."

The question which this essay raises is: Was there in the duality of Emerson a clear and recognizable vein of that characteristic American form of thought which goes by the popular name of pragmatism? Should he be classified only with idealists and mystics, or does he belong also in the company of Thomas Jefferson, Charles Pierce, William James, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr. and John Dewey — to name only a few of the leading American pragmatists? I ask this question, not in the mood of mere scholastic inquiry. On the contrary, the issue involved seems to me of great importance to contemporary and future criticism. Since Emerson remains our most completely expressed American writer and critic, it is important to know whether or not his thought is or is not usable in relation to the practical affairs of life.

Since it has become a conviction with me that Emerson was a "prophet whose time is not yet out" and that we have left unexplored the pragmatic element of his philosophy, it has become my purpose to work this vein. My method will be simple: I propose to examine two major philosophical problems from the Emersonian point of view and then indicate those features of his treatment of each issue which seem to me to exemplify the pragmatic method.

SCIENCE AND HUMAN NATURE

Emerson faced science eyes front. Unlike some of our contemporary humanists, he did not shy away from the implications of a scientifically-revealed universe. He not only attempted to understand the science of his day but occasionally anticipated its findings. While Charles Darwin was hesitantly withholding his startling conception of organic evolution, Emerson, to whom this form of tentativeness was foreign, asserted his belief in an evolutionary process. Writers on scientific subjects who evidently influenced Emerson were John Hunter, Geoffrey Saint-Hillaire,

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Goethe (whose relationship to science was peculiarly like that of Emerson), Agassiz, Richard Owen and Darwin. Emerson thought of science as a door opening new vistas of human thought and experiment. He assumed that in nature everything moves from the simple to the complex, and from this principle he assumed that natural progress might be measured in terms of a movement from crudeness to fineness. When he sought a suitable simile to express his sense of need for reform he turned to Nature: "What is man born for but to be a Reformer, a Remaker of what has been made; a renouncer of lies; a restorer of truth and good, imitating that great Nature which embosoms us all, and which sleeps no moment on an old past, but every hour repairs herself, yielding us every morning a new day, and with every pulsation a new life?" Nature's answer is always "I grow." And if we seek in Nature a fixed point, an ultimate resting-place, we are destined to be disappointed. "We can point nowhere to anything final." But, we have nevertheless a clue for our adaptation, and here lies the province of science: "Tendency appears on all hands." Whatever is permanent in Nature is a "perpetual inchoation" and "if anything could stand still, it would be crushed and dissipated by the torrent it resisted, and if it were a mind, would be crazed."

Critics, who must also be philosophers if their criticism is to be something more than a cumulative series of superficial positives and negatives, should be appraised in the light of their conceptions of human nature, that is, of psychology. For the metaphysician: *Cosmos*. For the philosopher: *Man*. It seems to me clear that Emerson was much more the latter than the former. Psychological facts constituted for him the given data from which generalizations were to be drawn. Unhappily, the requisite psychological facts were not available in Emerson's time. There were as yet no experimental psychologists, and whatever psychology was taught found its place in natural philosophy. But Emerson was not one easily daunted by want of fact. Since there were no professional psychologists, Emerson became one. He possessed no instruments of measurement, no laboratory and no approved methods of observation. But he had sharp senses, and he observed human beings in action. From these observations he

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constructed a curiously modern conception of human nature and conduct.

Emerson's psychological categories were: instinct, memory, will, intelligence, sense-perception, pleasure-pain, the thinking process, compensation and mental pathology. Over and over these terms appear in his essays and in his *Journal*. Graduate students specializing in psychology and moving about in their laboratories filled with instruments of precision could have their fun with Emerson's categories. They could demonstrate the folly of his simple faith in intelligence and reason. They would probably relegate his theory of instincts to the limbo of discarded superstition, and they would certainly derogate his naïve notions of freedom and of will. They should be warned, however, not to go too far in easy condemnation, for they will soon discover that Emerson, although as psychologist a creature of his time, was deeply concerned over the same issues with which they are still involved and for which they can give no completely satisfactory solutions.

The basic psycho-philosophical questions which were raised by Emerson are: (a) To what extent are we tied to, limited by, our animal bodies? (b) What is the nature of fact? (c) In what degree is learning a matter of experience? (d) What is the nature of the adjusting process? It is difficult to furnish summary Emersonian answers to these queries but as I understand Emerson, this is his response: Man is an animal who may rise above the animal plane through the use of intelligence. Man's behavior may be understood by studying the responses which he makes to his environment, beginning with instincts and ending with demonology, which might be taken as a synonym for mental hygiene. The distinctly human phases of man's conduct reside in memory, knowing and the use of knowledge. Above these animal and human traits stands the capacity for intuition, moral judgment and the exercise of will. Briefly, Emerson's answer to the generalized problem which psychology posits may be stated thus: Man is a physical being with spiritual potentialities.

It is my contention that the whole of Emerson's psychology is compatible with the pragmatic thesis. An examination of John

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Dewey's psychological position would reveal distinctions in detail but not with respect to total congruence. Insofar as alterations in theory are to be required in the future, I believe that John Dewey would readily join Emerson in saying: "I await the insight which our advancing knowledge of material laws shall furnish."

MEANS AND ENDS

No surer test of a philosopher's incorruptibility can be found than his treatment of the problem of means and ends. Here lies the breaking-point for both individual character and the social order. Failure to come to grips with the means-ends question leads to opportunism. Denial of the necessary relation of consonance between ends and means is an invitation to conspiracy. Individuals who have not resolved the means-ends issue are not to be trusted, and when statecraft operates on the assumption that ends justify the means the consequences are tragic.

Pragmatists are frequently scolded, not merely because they apply the rule of relativity to ends, but because they devote so much of their time and energy to critical examination of ways, instruments, means. From the pragmatic viewpoint it seems clear that whoever selects good ends but refuses to consider the dependency of ends upon means is defeated before he begins. The moral principle lies at this very point. Each step in the direction of a goal is an act of moral criticism. Separation of means from ends constitutes a form of intellectual and moral betrayal.

How does Emerson meet this test? I doubt if anyone has yet uttered wiser words about this ancient and perplexing problem than those found in this crisp sentence of his: "Cause and effect, means and ends, seed and fruit, cannot be severed; for the effect already blooms in the cause, the end pre-exists in the means, the fruit in the seed." We become what we do. *The end pre-exists in the means.*

There can be no doubt concerning Emerson's pragmatic mood in this context; therefore I move quickly to application. Democratic societies are now confronted with the necessity of achieving certain ends which are essential for their stability. One of these ends is security against the hazards of modern civilization, security

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from want, unemployment, sickness, accident and old age. A stable society which guarantees these securities must find ways of planning its national economy in such manner as to produce a maximum of consumer goods and furnish steady employment at high wages. Loud voices now proclaim that this is an end which lies entirely outside the sphere of democratic means. They insist that the attainment of this end must be bought at the price of freedom. The logic of these alarmists falls into a neat syllogism:

Premise: Economic planning is advocated by Fascists.
Minor Premise: If you advocate economic planning,
Conclusion: you are a Fascist.

The word "Communist" may be substituted for "Fascist" with the same results.

This issue is rapidly driving the United States to a crisis. If there are no democratic means available for achieving the ends which have come to be the condition of our stability, then the democratic era is finished. Hence, the democratic crisis lies definitely here, in the realm of means and ends. The Emersonian answer is plainly pragmatic. "Experiment is credible," says Emerson. Or, again, "I simply experiment, an endless seeker with no Past at my back." But there is an even more pronounced pragmatic tone in the Emersonian doctrine. He does not ask us to experiment for mere purpose of experiment. He promises that if we strive for a worthy end, we may find that our striving has brought into view other ends which may be superior. He does not promise ultimate success, for here also Emerson remains faithful to the tentative optimism of pragmatism. He says: "We live in a system of approximations. Every end is prospective of some other end, which is also temporary; a round and final success nowhere." The lesson to be learned, obviously, is that something must be tried.

The current debates arising from the crisis of our time, whether directed toward economic reform or toward the prospects of world peace, seem to me to lead always to frustration. From frustration to pessimism is a short distance, but a journey which those who lack courage for experimentation are often forced to take. We do not ask the right questions. We appear to be caught

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in a logical trap which forces us to discuss issues in terms of mutually exclusive antitheses: Communism *or* Fascism, *either* Free Enterprise *or* State Regimentation, a Planned Society *or* a Free Society: such are the unrealistic choices presented to us. These *either-ors* are fictions, logical devices for confusing the citizen and frightening him from experiment.

Emerson, like all sound pragmatists, was aware of the dangers of perfectionism. On this account he constructed a theory of compensation, again anticipating psychologists by at least a half-century. Human beings are not, nor are they ever likely to be, perfectly adapted to their environment. Their capacities are not always commensurate with their desires. Realization of these discrepancies, these imperfections, leads timid persons to pessimism. The less timid merely accept the fact and set forth anew to experiment, to move step by step in the direction of what is possible, to bring the possible nearer the desirable.

Now that I have finished this simple exercise I have a feeling that some of the most important and timely (that is, relevant to our time) topics have been omitted. Emerson on politics, religion, democracy, economics, freedom, history, morals, culture and art would have furnished equally appropriate themes for my purpose. In each of these areas he had something important to say, and he said it with vigor and freshness. He did not sustain the pragmatic mood (a most difficult discipline for anyone) throughout, but there was in all his thought an allegiance to the experimental approach to life, and it was this fidelity to an unfinished but promising world which guarantees his permanent place in American life and thought. On this account the late Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes was able to say with honesty, "The only firebrand of my youth that burns to me as brightly as ever, is Emerson."

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Merchants of Light

L. Ruth Middlebrook

HARVARD College pays me for doing what I would gladly pay Harvard for permitting me to do." The words are George Herbert Palmer's—the great translater of Homer, and professor of literature and ethics at Cambridge a generation ago. The voice is that of any college instructor in his *first* year of teaching.

What happens afterward is a long story. It has been told many times by good men from Plato and Marcus Aurelius to Roger Ascham and, most recently, Jacques Barzun, perhaps the most engaging teacher in America today. All of them have been wise and eloquent. In none of their accounts, however, is the sum of the teacher's life broken down into bread-and-butter language.

But in a world where nothing is had for nothing, teachers, like any other human beings, must eat, however high their thinking and low their living. They must occasionally buy shoes, see a doctor, educate their children, and even own a book. Unlike others, however, they must not make a noise about it. Teaching is a calling, not a trade. In the priesthood coin of the realm is never mentioned.

So teachers have not yet got around the central inhibition of their common soul—to admit openly that teaching is merely another means of livelihood in which, probably more than in any other profession, they learn to labor and to wait. If while they wait, "they learn in suffering what they teach in song," it's good for their souls.

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I say this in no mood of bitterness, with no intention of condemning college administrators alone. Whether they are privately endowed or publicly supported, colleges in the end belong to the people. What goes on in colleges will go on as long as people are more alarmed about the shortage in domestic help than they are about the hundred thousand teachers the nation needs. What goes on in colleges will continue to go on as long as people feel that it is more important to pay $20 a day to those who tend their plumbing than those who mold the character of their children.

II

But the trouble lies deeper than the blindness of the people to the dangers of such a state of affairs. The problem is complex. At its root lies an alarming failure of educators in administrative posts to recognize their twofold responsibility to the people at large and to their own staffs. They have failed to show how indispensable higher education is to the immediate welfare of the nation.

We have just fought the most costly war in history, and have won for ourselves greater insecurity than ever before. The answer of every nation to its people can no longer be more material wealth. It must be more brain power to outthink, outplan and outwit the forces of destruction within and without its boundaries. And how have we protected ourselves? By permitting our greatest minds to be so exploited and taken for granted, that in despair and disillusionment they have fled to business, and left our strategic laboratories and our higher institutions of learning to the lame, the halt and the timid.

Not that business itself has been too farsighted. Its unwillingness to share will yet prove its undoing. The wealth of the country is in large part the increment wheedled out of its best brains. Business itself is a kind of legalized appropriation of the intellectual gains won in colleges and laboratories throughout the nation. In an engaging article written for the *Atlantic Monthly* some years ago, T. Swann Harding cites the example of a young scientist who held a $3,000 a year fellowship at a large university, a fellowship that included the privilege of working in one of the

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finest chemical laboratories in America. The stipend was granted by a drug manufacturing concern; the young man was to "potter around with ephedrine."

For three years he pottered around, during which time he was visited off and on by the company's technical men. They came merely to look on, ask an occasional question, and "pick up scraps." The scraps they picked up in those three years, Harding points out, were worth a mere $150,000 to the company.

Today college administrators know these facts better than anyone else in America. They supplied the human materials for the war projects that hastened the end of hostilities. They alone know how many of their best minds have left their classrooms for more lucrative jobs in business. What one science department chairman pointed out at a recent faculty meeting in my own college is true of all higher institutions: "Unless something is done, scholarship [scientific research] will suffer a blow from which it will not recover in a generation." Failure to read these words right may indeed be very costly.

No, business itself has not been too farsighted. If instead of doing the proverbial trembling in its boots about the corruption of American youth by "red" professors, it would give these same professors incomes commensurate with their training and worth, there would be far fewer "red" professors. They would be as eager to retain the status quo as business itself. Professors, too, are human. Business should take its time about thinking that over.

In steel mills, in railroads, in law offices, in button factories, we hire "the best that money can buy." In schools and colleges we hire "the best we can get at the price," and the figure is so low that "the best at the price" often turns out to be at the professional bottom of the heap.

III

College teachers themselves are not blameless. Too many of them still enter the academic world starry-eyed. Too many of them do not ask the right questions before they commit their lives to the financial humiliations of *the good life*. They do not realize that American colleges impose a burden on the lower

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ranks (who do most of the teaching) that few but the unscrupulous, the lucky or the geniuses can overcome. These lower ranks of instructors and assistants are pitilessly exploited and often led on to the destruction of their morale in ways I shall examine.

Most college teachers enter the profession by way of an assistantship in a large university, which has a graduate school to keep alive, even if the process demands artificial feeding. Usually, the young candidate has an M.A. and is given a class or two in, let us say, English composition. The understanding is that he is to go on with his graduate work, achieve a doctor's degree, and move on to another institution to spread the gospel and join the merchants of light.

He is usually twenty-two or twenty-three at the time of his appointment and must live on the $1,200 or $1,800 which his assistantship allows him. In the meantime, he must keep reasonably well dressed, look happy, and be on the alert to impress the chairman of the department, so that he will be reappointed a second, third or even fourth year, if necessary, to complete his residence requirement and write his thesis.

It becomes clear to him after the first year, however, that he cannot live on $1,200 or $1,800 a year while he sweats out the doctorate. So he begins to halve his graduate work and increase his teaching load for added pay. Before the young instructor knows it, five or six years have slipped by. The head of the department feels that the instructor has not dealt honestly with him, for he has not yet achieved his doctor's degree. The instructor, on his side, learning at first hand the uninspiring, grueling, often senseless requirements of doctoral study, begins to wonder what the definition of scholarship by graduate school standards is, and why it must take on the guise of an inquisition. He fails to see the connection between creative teaching and the humorless memorizing of five hundred dates and five thousand "crucial" items for a three-hour, third-degree oral examination by "experts" — as if he must prove once and for all that he will never again read another book or learn another fact about literature, or whatever the subject of the inquisition.

What is this doctoral abracadabra? he begins to wonder. He

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looks around him and discovers that the most effective teachers in his department are less often among the older men (the Ph.D.'s) than among the younger ones, who may not have gone through the "discipline" of the doctoral regimen. He observes that frequently these "undisciplined" men are more abreast of the contemporary world, write better, speak better and think more originally than those who have been conditioned by "higher" research. When, in addition, he learns that with a Ph.D. an instructor can receive as little as $2,400, and an associate professor frequently no more than $3,500, the degree has lost all worth or dignity.

Most demoralizing of all, he can think of leading scholars and teachers in America who were without benefit of the doctor's degree — scholars in Shakespeare, and Chaucer, and American culture at Harvard, and Columbia, and Chicago. He remembers that Oxford and Cambridge frankly scorn the doctor's degree, seeming to reserve it almost exclusively for Americans. He recalls that neither the Master of Balliol nor George Saintsbury was handicapped by the lack of a doctorate. He recalls, too, the Society of Fellows that A. Lawrence Lowell founded at Harvard as a protest against the "Ph.D. system"; its members are forbidden to work for the degree. Yet one of them, the young scholar Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., won this year's Pulitzer award in history for his brilliant *Age of Jackson*.

It doesn't add up, however the young college teacher figures it. But the damage has already been done. He is nearing thirty; he has not been able to put aside money to venture a new career. By this time, too, he has acquired a wife and child; so he makes his peace with his job and his responsibilities. And like the philosophy of the common man Santayana talks about, his teaching becomes "an old wife that gives him no pleasure, yet he cannot live without her, and resents any aspersions that strangers may cast on her character."

I have here spoken of English, because it is the story I know most intimately. I am certain, however, that the problems of a college teacher in any other liberal subject are comparable.

One exception might be noted. The doctor's degree in science

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is a much more honest and realistic affair. A thesis need not run into hundreds of pages in which an ounce of fact is assaulted by a ton of footnotes. And once a student has acquired his doctor of science degree he can go into the various commercial laboratories of the country and command a respectable salary for his achievement. In science, only the born teacher or the very timid will prefer the sanctuary of a $3,000 to $6,000 position in the average college to an outside laboratory post paying twice as much. Therein lies the real problem for the advancement of science today. Unless universities hold on to those scientists who demand that their salaries match outside offers, a collapse in higher education will precipitate a crisis in the nation's welfare too alarming to contemplate.

IV

What, then, is the answer? We must return to our first point. As long as people in general, and private enterprise in particular, feel that it is more important to pay $20 a day to those who tend their plumbing than those who mold the character of their children, college classrooms will increasingly fail to attract the best minds and the ablest teachers.

Unless educators recognize the urgency of dramatizing the life-and-death importance of supporting higher education, they will not only fail those who have dedicated their lives to teaching, but they will also have betrayed the nation's highest interests and jeopardized her future.

Unless college administrators re-examine their requirements for teaching and re-define the scope and value of the doctorate in liberal scholarship, they will attract fewer and fewer personalities of the kind that can guide students to be at home in the whole of life. Why, in these days in particular, the deference to an outmoded Germanic system of mental goose-stepping? Isn't it about time that we declare our independence from intellectual Teutonism and write a definition of scholarship that fits the time, and the man, and the work he is going to do? No honest teacher objects to careful preparatory training for his job, but it is the relevance of that training to the job at hand that he questions. How

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will writing an unreadable book on an unthinkable subject help him to teach freshmen to think clearly and write readably?

Let me be more specific. What I mean further by colleges re-examining their requirements for teaching is just this. If in their eyes no teacher without a Ph.D. should be on a college faculty, they ought not to compromise with that judgment. Once and for all, they should in no circumstances hire anyone without the degree. By so clean-cut an approach, they would spare themselves much and varied embarrassment and at the same time force out of teaching those people who are either not docile enough, too creative, or too realistic to submit to the present system. If administrators believe in the doctorate as the indispensable requirement of a college teacher, they should have the courage to say so firmly and consistently, and practice should coincide with their belief. If their theory is right, they have nothing to fear. They should be left with the perfect formula of the college teacher: the scholar, the gentleman, the Ph.D. No non-Ph.D. should be permitted to handle any classes whatsoever, just as a non-M.D. would be jailed for accepting fees for any practice of medicine.

If, after college administrators have applied their theory, however, they should discover that they are left with more gatherers of learning than conveyers of light, and, in the process, have stripped their graduate schools of non-Ph.D. material, they will at least have been true to themselves — even if student preferences for those barbarian teachers without the doctorate can sometimes prove embarrassing.

But administrators do not themselves face the issue. They need grist for their graduate mills; they have budgets to balance: M.A.'s seem to be their only answer. Of course, some of them do face the problem more squarely. They admit the truth that a doctorate is in no sense a guarantee of a better teacher or a more sentient mind. They know that teaching is an intuitive art, and that it involves first and foremost a quick at-homeness with young minds. They realize that the great end of education is to give these young minds courage to discover and use their own powers, not to stuff them with the findings of others. A teacher of under-

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graduates who cannot achieve that end for his students is a failure, no matter how faithfully he achieved his doctorate, or how many papers he has contributed to the Annals of the Society for the Discovery of Lost Epics.

Here are a few pertinent questions about the whole approach to the Ph.D. which, it seems to me, administrators leave unanswered.

Why should the doctorate in, let us say English, require, in addition to three to five years of graduate study, a thesis on an "original" subject, which almost invariably becomes an obscure point on an obscure figure in the dark backward of time? Such a thesis can no more guarantee good teaching or even scholarship in the noblest sense of the word than, to quote Horace Walpole, "the moldy thigh-bone of a saint would give of the unction of his sermons."

Is the Ph.D. more important than an M.D. to the community? At no medical school that I know is a doctor, after six or eight years of study, required to publish in addition an original thesis on some moot point in the literature of medicine and thereby prove that he is eligible to treat the community for mumps. Doctors treat ailing bodies; teachers treat growing minds.

The truth of the matter is that the over-emphasized thesis is only a symptom of something more fundamentally wrong in the graduate school setup of the country. The whole American tradition of working one's way through the graduate school is as pernicious, to all but the geniuses, as working one's way through undergraduate college. It is an unhappy but verifiable fact that graduate schools fatten their enrollment at the ultimate expense of their most promising students. Those who have not the means for doctoral study should be given full scholarships of $2,000 to $2,500 a year until the degree is achieved at the normal end of three years. Then, in a way perhaps comparable to the internship of the doctor of medicine, these young Ph.D.'s should be passed on into three-year instructorships at, shall we say, $3,000 to $4,000. After they have served their "internship," the opportunity for promotions and salary increases based on honest and predictable standards should follow.

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At present, however, the formula in most of our colleges is quite different. If you are undeniably a good teacher but have no doctorate, your chairman will at once point to the lack of the Ph.D. as the reason for not promoting you. If you have the Ph.D., he will speak vaguely and with some embarrassment about good teaching as an added requirement for promotion. If you are both a good teacher and have the Ph.D., he will explain that the department can absorb only a limited number of professorial rank; that an administrative post might be the answer. If you already have administrative duties, then scholarly publishing is the magic step to the golden stairway.

Is it any wonder that half of the departments in every college in the country are manned by instructors over thirty-five, some even creeping into their fifties, with ceiling salaries of $3,000?

But colleges use big words and lots of them. They talk about the human beings who are not expendable — apparently not including their own instructors. They talk about the sacredness of the individual — when not referring to the college teacher. They talk about the dignity of human worth — excepting, of course, their own staff. They talk about charity toward others — which has no bearing whatsoever on charity toward their own household. They talk about democracy, and the larger understanding, and *the good life* — how they love the phrase! — and produce a society within their own walls which is as severely stratified as a medieval barony. It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for an instructor to pass from his rank to professorial status.

Yet Horace Mann called education of the young "the noblest work that man or angels could do."

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Eagle Flight

Marguerite Janvrin Adams

Earth was a blur; from the vast height of space
he scanned the city (the open map of his heart):
here was a chart
written in legible letters,
always the fetters
that bound, rimmed by the city's face —
into Broadway signs would flare, go thin
like smoke in air; he could hear the din
of New Year's eve, boats by the Jersey shore;
the intermittent roar
of the swift underground;
the sound
of wheels on rails, New Haven, then the Cape.
Once more things took shape
out of mist: islands of fir-tipped Maine
sprang green from rain.
His engine choked, missed a beat; he closed
his eyes to coastal fields, fog, bay.
Never a moment comes but it imposes
recurrent pain: there was a sudden way
lilacs grew in spring —
he shut his eyes to stab of iris, wing
of gull, terns skimming a tide in April.
There was a maple
aflame in October, succulent marsh-grass bending
at a day's ending.
The engine purred; over black gulfs it sobbed
into starlight; over Labrador throbbed
into the dark peninsula of night,
out of sight.

© MARGUERITE JANVRIN ADAMS has for many years been a contributor to magazines and newspapers. She is the author of two books of verse, *I Give You Words* and *Insignia Amoris*.

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Back of him lay headlands, harsh and brown,
rising like billows, part of the land, part sea;
there was a subtle droning, a spurt, as he
turned to the stiff control.
Good-night, dear, this is a night for dreams.
Vastness above; the Northern Lights had driven
an irised fan across the somber heaven;
the gyro-compass pointed east-northeast;
his mind evoked the semblance of the past.
Under his foot icicles crunched, the gleams
from an open door flashed upon trampled snow,
one o'clock by his watch, yet time to go
to Pierre's . . . were Easter bells on his radio?
There was a girl he knew in New Hampshire once —
that was where a river of autumn bronze
ran to the sea, the sea he banked above.
A shove
at the stick, a lighted match, a flare
shot into air.
Pennsylvania, his grandmother's hearth, the smell,
remembered well,
of spice, of balsam, peppermint canes, a store
of sugar animals; dawn; at last before
his plane a line, a faintly penciled land —
British — at hand.
The earth was a blur, down altitudes he traced
the country gone, assembled each to each
forest, town, beach.
Out of the void his trembling engine raced;
out of the void must grow
accustomed ground for weary feet to know.
His tired eyes, misted with treacherous night,
searched the sky, followed the gulls' long flight
into unfathomed light.
There was a street at home — the worn name slipped,
was lost. The chilled wing tipped
slanting across the incandescent sun:
all lands are one!

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A Letter from George Washington

Walter Cerf

MORE than a decade ago, I found, in the sleepy gardens of Arles, a well preserved Roman marble copy of the head of a beautiful Greek youth stuck on a fence pole like a hat on a rack. If the Germans have not discovered and stolen it, I hope that some day, when peace and plenty have returned to France, I shall carry out a clandestine salvage campaign in the Arlesian garden. But another find, which I made in Paris shortly after the liberation, I feel ought not to remain unheralded.

It was a Paris still in love with the liberators of France. There was such a charm in the abandonment with which the city gave itself to the overseas warriors, that they were touched into good manners and kindness. Somehow, the Etoile and the Champs and the Concorde, and the happiness which filled them — a happiness so much the more stirring since it was the happiness of obviously miserable and poor people — all had their effect upon us, and instead of lounging stupidly around the street corners as we had done in murky London, we wandered about admiringly or sat in the little sidewalk cafés, trying to make French conversation with the women who frequented them.

Strolling down the Rue de la Paix, I passed the house where my brother had lived, and I decided to find out whether any of his property had been saved from the Germans. The concierge jumped up with a shout, and coming toward me with hands outstretched, smiled and sighed and talked, all at the same time.

© Before the War WALTER CERF traveled in Asia, Africa and Europe. He has taught philosophy at Northwestern and Princeton Universities, and is now at the University of Minnesota.

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"Ah, Monsieur Walter, vous allez bien? On le voit. Et Monsieur Ernest?"

She wept when she heard of my brother's death.

"And Mademoiselle Minette?" she asked me. "You know what happened to her?"

I did not.

"The Germans burnt her alive. She had gone underground, you know, somewhere in the South. The Germans caught her and when she did not talk, they burned her alive. Ah, ces boches. We are so happy that you are here. How we have waited for you, how we have waited for you."

She sat down in her little booth to clean the artichokes that she had brought home. There on the table was a child's shoe, cast in bronze and fastened to a base of black marble.

She saw my eyes riveted to it.

"Oh, is this yours? The only thing left in your brother's flat. The Nazis took everything."

"Yes," I said. "Mother had it made from my brother's first shoe. If you don't mind I'll send it home."

"Take it, take it, Monsieur Walter."

I wanted to leave, but she insisted that I should meet Mr. Martelli.

Mr Martelli-Chautard was my brother's landlord, and he lived in a flat in this house which had been built by one of his ancestors under the Emperor.

"Le voilà." The concierge rose and introduced me to Mr. Martelli-Chautard. Like so many Parisians confronted with the American invasion, he dropped his customary reserve and asked me to follow him up to his home.

From his apartment, the Opéra and the Place Vendôme and even the Tuileries can be seen fading into a mother-of-pearl haze, and I stayed perhaps a bit too long on the small balcony trying to visualize (instead of the bicycles, that looked silly in this street made for showmanship) the columns of elegant cars that used to roll down toward the Opéra. Against the soldiers clad in olive drab, the Parisiennes wagtailing in front of Cartier and Chanel glittered — out-of-place — like diamonds in a setting of brass.

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I returned into the dim light of the salon and we sat down. I was told the story of Paris suppressed by the Boches and liberated by her own citizens, Monsieur giving the general outline, Madame the concrete examples. It all ended, of course, with the affirmation: "Now that you Americans are here, all will go well." Nobody could at that time anticipate that the following winter would bring the French more hunger and cold than they had suffered under the Germans.

With a certain diplomatic finesse Mr. Martelli mentioned that in a very different situation, when the French had come to help us in our own war of liberation, one of his ancestors had been Capitaine de Vaisseau under De Grasse. After some hesitation and an obvious moral effort, my host rose, went to a safe in the wall and cautiously and carefully took out a dossier.

"I have a surprise for you," he said.

The dossier contained letters written by Admiral de Grasse to Capitaine de Martelli-Chautard. Among those stately papers adorned with the elaborate elegance of their time, there was a simple sheet. It was this that Mr. Martelli handed me.

"Yes," Mr. Martelli said, "it is George Washington all right. This note has never been published and I have never shown it to anybody. Your compatriots will be interested, though. When you are back in the States after the war, I'll send you a photostat."

The photostat is on my desk, leaning against my brother's bronze shoe.

II

Washington's note reads as follows:

> Sir:
> From the best Information I have been
> able to obtain — the above are the proper Sta:
> :tions which ought to be occupied by the Ships
> for the Security of the River & to prevent the
> Retreat of the Enemy —
> I am Sir your most Obed Servant
> G Washington
> To Monsr de Martelli
> Comande the Experiment

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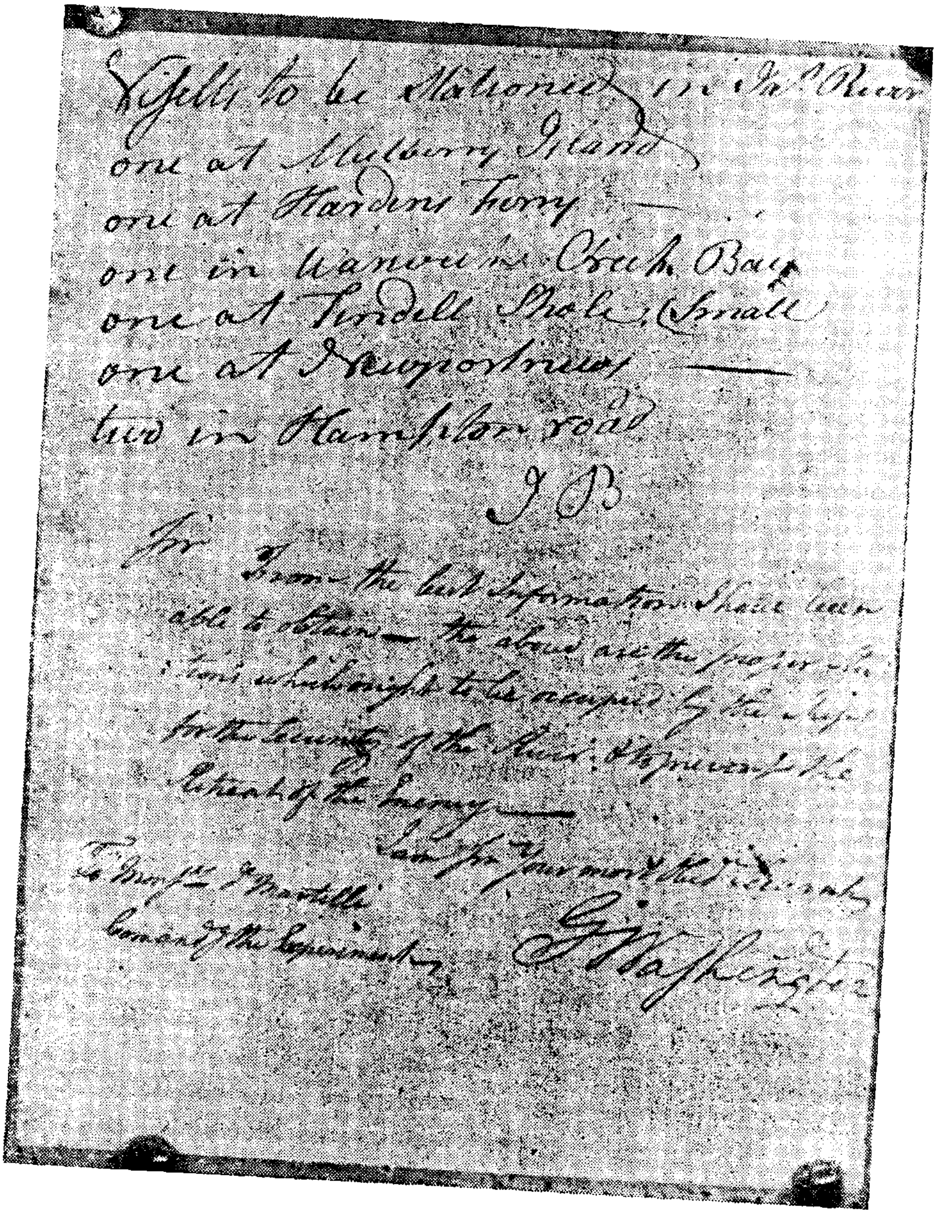

Vessels to be Stationed in Jas. River
one at Mulberry Island
one at Hardins Ferry —
one in Warwick Creek Bay
one at Tindalls Shole, (small
one at Newport News —
two in Hampton road

J B

Sir

From the best Information I have been able to obtain — the above are the proper Stations which ought to be occupied by the Ships for the Security of the River & to prevent the retreat of the Enemy —

I am Sir Your most Obed. Servant

G Washington

To Monsr. de Martelle
Comand. of the Experiment

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"The above are the proper stations" refers to a list which fills the upper half of the paper and reads:

Vesells to be stationed in Ja[s] River
one at Mulberry Island
one at Hardens Ferry —
one in Warwuke Creek bay
one at Tindell Shole. (Small)
one at Newportnews —
two in Hampton road

J B *

The note is undated, but it can be assumed to have been written in the middle of September, 1781.

Capitaine Joseph Jacques François de Martelli-Chautard (born in Toulon in 1743, died at Ollioules, Var, in 1810), commanding the *Expériment*, had come with De Grasse from the West Indies to help in the siege of Yorktown, to which Cornwallis had withdrawn from Virginia.

On September 2, Washington had not yet been advised of the arrival of De Grasse's fleet, and expressed to Lafayette his anxiety for news. This very day his anxiety was to be relieved: De Grasse sat down to write him; and after a sea battle with the English, the blockade of the James and York Rivers was effected. Washington congratulated De Grasse on September 15 for his victory over the English, and ordered the Comte de Justine down from the Head of Elk to Jamestown. It was probably about this time that Washington addressed his note to Capitaine de Martelli.

The purpose of stationing ships in the James River was twofold. There was always the danger that Cornwallis might try to escape south into North Carolina. As late as September 17, Nathanael Greene tried to raise militia in North Carolina against this emergency.

The other purpose was the security of the river itself. It was through the James River that Washington received many of his provisions. On September 20, on board the "Queen Charlotte" anchored in the James River, Washington announced to the French admiral the safe arrival of provision vessels.

* J. B. very probably stands for John Barry.

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Whether Capitaine de Martelli actually received enough ships from De Grasse to station them at the points indicated on Washington's note I have no way of ascertaining. I suppose that the answer to this can be found in Mr. Martelli's dossier in Paris.

The only other known direct communication between De Martelli and Washington is in the files of the Library of Congress (wrongly recorded under Chautard, Martelli having been taken to be the first name). On September 25, Capitaine de M.-C., from the *Expériment*, sent a memorandum to Washington, asking for the exchange of a Capitaine Segond. Three weeks later, on October 14, Washington answered him. At that time, the *Expériment* was in the York River.

The French fleet, after having helped us to win our freedom, sailed back into home waters to suffer a sharp defeat by the English. Capitaine de Martelli eventually became a member of the Society of the Cincinnati — in August, 1784. This seems to have been the last connection between the De Martellis and the United States — until 1944, when it was an American army that helped France win its liberation and an American soldier who chanced into Mr. Martelli's home, to find himself in the presence of George Washington.

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Portrait . . .

ALFRED NORTH WHITEHEAD

Theodore Spencer

Mr. Whitehead's philosophy can speak for itself; it would be an impertinence for an amateur, a student of literature, to attempt to discuss or summarize it. Yet its appeal to such a student is great, not only because of its organic wholeness and unity, but also because of its emphasis on creativity. It seems to accomplish, in a way that other philosophies do not, or accomplish only partially, an illumined living description of life itself. It seems to be aware of all possible relationships: to include change and permanence, "actual entities" and "eternal objects," to take into account feeling as well as thought, to embrace both science and religion, to be available as an explanation of reality under any and all circumstances. It has no sediment of what Whitehead calls "inert ideas"; however inadequately the amateur may understand it, the awakening it gives him is similar to the awakening given by a work of art. It is supple, inclusive, radiant — not a matter of mere categories and definitions, but an organic, dynamic vision shining with wisdom and with insights, which, however firmly they may be based on reason, cover wider areas of awareness than reason by itself can describe. Its boldness and serenity stretch the speculative imagination so that when the reader returns to re-encounter concrete individual experience, he finds that experience richer and more understandable as a result of his having shared an illumination so profound and so benign. It is a philosophy, as many of Whitehead's own writings show, which is not merely speculative, but which can be applied to practical problems as well.

"The sense for style," says Whitehead in his essay on "The Aims of Education," "is an aesthetic sense, based on admiration for the direct attainment of a foreseen end, simply and without waste. Style in art, style in literature, style in science, style in logic, style in practical execution have fundamentally the same aesthetic qualities, namely, attainment and restraint. . . . Style, in its finest sense, is the last acquirement of the educated mind; it is also the most useful. It pervades the whole being. . . . Style is the ultimate morality of mind."

In this deep meaning of the word, style is as much a part of Mr. Whitehead's character and personality as it is of his philosophical system and (I have no doubt) his mathematics. It is partly derived from the tradition of nineteenth-century, middle-class, English liberalism of which Mr. Whitehead is perhaps the last and certainly one of the most eminent representatives. He grew up in a deeply-rooted tradition, rooted in the past, in a firmly established system of education, in a "climate of opinion" which nourished the free inquiry of the mind and gave it leisure to speculate and to soar, to "ask foolish questions" and follow abstract inquiries, a climate that at the same time was resonant with admonitions of responsibility to moral standards, to the welfare of England, to the potentialities, seemingly so great, of progress. As one looks back on it now, an ocean and two wars away, it seems an enviable lot to have been born a middle class Englishman two years after Darwin published his *Origin of Species* and Mill his essay, *On Liberty*, and

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to grow up at a time when material evil seemed increasingly remediable, when the devil had not let loose upon the world the internal combustion engine, and when the belief that to pursue apparently useless scientific knowledge was the highest aim of civilized mankind had not yet been proved a ghastly irony.

At the time of Alfred North Whitehead's birth, on February 15, 1861, his father, an Anglican clergyman, was headmaster of a private school at Ramsgate, in the Isle of Thanet. The family, he tells us in an autobiographical note — grandfather, father, uncles and brothers — were all concerned with education, religion and Local Administration. He grew up surrounded by evidences of history. "I *saw* history," he says, "before I read it." In the neighborhood of his father's parish there were relics of Roman, Saxon and especially Norman architecture, as well as buildings and traditions dating from later centuries. And when, at fifteen, he went to school at Sherborne, in Dorsetshire, the relics of the past "were even more obvious." The school was nearly 1200 years old, claiming Alfred the Great as a pupil, and the boys studied their Greek Septuagint under the sound of abbey bells which Henry VIII had brought from the Field of the Cloth of Gold.

This early awareness of the past helped to shape Whitehead's interest both directly and indirectly: it created a life-long interest in history, still very evident in his conversation, and it may not be too fanciful to see its influence in his metaphysics, where the past, time and the continuum play such an important role. One cannot help wondering what the philosophy of John Dewey would have been had he had the same boyhood background as Mr. Whitehead.

Another important part of Mr. Whitehead's background was the type of man who influenced him. His grandfather he describes as a remarkable man, his father, who taught him till he went to school, though "not intellectual . . . possessed personality," and the head of Sherborne, a Welshman named Harper, was, Mr. Whitehead says, a "genius in character." He tells of a scene ("I see it as if it were yesterday") which occurred when Whitehead was sixteen or seventeen, when Harper caned a boy in front of the whole school, and then put his head in his hands and sobbed.

Whitehead was a success at school. He was captain of the cricket XI and the football XV, he was Head Boy of the school, and it was a great day in his life when these honors were read out at home from the school magazine. To be Head of the School (Sherborne was modelled on Arnold's Rugby) was a job of much responsibility, and brought out that part of his character which was many years later to make him so able a chairman of committees, etc., in the development of popular education in London.

Whitehead had done extra work in mathematics at school, and when he went up to Trinity College, Cambridge, at the age of nineteen and a half, he attended lectures on no other subject. But he had read a good deal of history and poetry at Sherborne, and at Cambridge only a small part of his education (as is true of every undergraduate everywhere) came from the lecture room. He was one of a homogeneous group, a group that perhaps only mid nineteenth-century England could have produced, all from the same sort of school, with the same sort of background.

"We discussed everything," he writes, "— politics, religion, philosophy, literature — with a bias toward literature. . . . Looking backwards across more than half a century, the conversations have the appearance of a daily Platonic dialogue." He belonged to the famous society founded by Hallam, Tennyson and their friends, called the "Apostles," consisting of eight or ten undergraduates and including at different times various ex-Apostles or "Angels" who had "taken wings" — had left the University for other airs. The Apostles met in each other's rooms on Saturday nights at ten o'clock, a paper was read, and then lots were drawn: the Apostle who drew No. 7 stood up in front of the fireplace and said exactly what was in his mind; what he said was never repeated, not even to a fellow-Apostle. The Apostles were the most brilliant and promising young men of their generation, and Mr. Whitehead is fond of recalling how admirable a group it was, and how important an edu-

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cational influence it exerted. But the life it epitomized depended, as he has said himself, "on social circumstances which have passed away — fortunately. The Platonic education was very limited in its application to life."

In 1885 Whitehead became a fellow of Trinity College, and soon afterward a University lecturer: he stayed at Cambridge for thirty years, was at the University of London for fourteen years, and has been at Harvard for twenty-two: sixty-six years, so far, of radiant influence.

Apart from his educational and social background a further most important shaping force should be referred to, and here his own words are the only appropriate ones. "In December 1890 my marriage with Evelyn Willoughby Wade took place. The effect of my wife upon my outlook on the world has been so fundamental, that it must be mentioned as an essential factor in my philosophic output. . . . Her vivid life has taught me that beauty, moral and aesthetic, is the aim of existence; and that kindness, and love, and artistic satisfaction are among its modes of attainment."

II

It is not the purpose of this brief sketch to discuss Mr. Whitehead's career as a mathematician, a philosopher or a teacher; it is enough to mention that at the end of the First World War he turned from mathematics to philosophy, and that at the age of sixty-three, when most men are ready to retire, Mr. Whitehead began at Harvard a fresh career of remarkable fruitfulness. Nor has he at any time been merely a contemplative thinker, withdrawn from active life; on the contrary he has taken part in local politics and, especially while at London, been intimately and very busily concerned with practical measures for improving popular education.

The result of this rich and happy career, so many-sided, unfolding so many potentialities, revealing in his own sense of the word, a style so admirable and radiant, is one of the great personalities of our time. Stimulating and profound as he has been on the lecture platform and in his books, it is in conversation that he can be most fully known; wise, modest, witty, tolerant and original, making any topic he mentions take on new colors and connotations, relating it to his organic vision of life so that it becomes a newly perceived part of process, a freshly alive reality.

Throughout his career, in spite of all his other occupations, Mr. Whitehead has kept at least one evening a week open for being at home to students. The present writer well remembers his first introduction to one of those evenings, twenty years ago. The apartment rooms on Memorial Drive in Cambridge, Massachusetts, were crowded with students and a few colleagues; in one room there was a circle around Mr. Whitehead, in another there was a circle around his wife. The students were not picked according to their ability, nor were they confined to students of philosophy; there were about fifty or sixty of them, men and women, some of them obviously lame ducks, some silent, some over-talkative, but all, apparently, of equal interest to the Whiteheads, each optimistically seen as possibly of promise and possible of good.

Mr. Whitehead sat in an armchair, short and a little bent, dressed in an old-fashioned, almost Victorian style, with a stiff collar, a beautifully tied gray silk four-in-hand, stiff cuffs showing slightly beyond the sleeves of his cutaway. His head was bald, with a fringe of longish white hair around it, touching the edge of his collar. As he talked he held his finger tips together in front of him. His face shone; it was round, with a pink and white complexion ("I look like Mr. Pickwick," he used to say), but it was also square, for the lines of his jaw were firmly carved, and the chin was strong. His mouth was full and warm, his nose somewhat aquiline and his deep-set blue eyes were wonderfully alive. They beamed and twinkled, not merely because he seemed to like the people he was talking to, but because, one felt, they were reflecting his own pleasure in expressing his thoughts, in relating the subject of the conversation to the deep values, the long-matured and organic vision, within.

There was nothing self-conscious about this; quite the reverse: the spell of his talk, its wonderful charm, existed just because

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self-consciousness was lacking; his talk was above self, beyond it, impersonal, philosophic, poetic, paradoxical. Yet his personality was so entirely delightful, it was so difficult to divorce the subject from the speaker, that one was tempted — perhaps wrongly — to transfer into Mr. Whitehead's own consciousness the sense of joy, of intellectual surprise and revelation, which he gave to his listeners: he was apparently having such a good time! His voice, like most English voices, especially like most Cantabrigian voices, had a wider range of pitch and inflection than an American voice. A graph made of it would look like a contour map of the White Mountains beside a contour map of Kansas: a sentence would begin on a high plateau, stay there for several syllables, then descend rapidly, and cover various altitudes and depths before it came to a stop. That first evening I met him, he was talking about Santayana; I remember only an aside: "Santayana writes too well to be a good philosopher; no philosopher should write too well."

Since Mr. Whitehead's retirement from active teaching, and hence from direct contact with students, he and his wife have given up their Sunday evenings; as a talker Mr. Whitehead has in recent years most vigorously flourished at the Monday evening meetings of the Society of Fellows, a group of carefully selected young scholars from all fields who have weekly dinners with a few senior members of the Harvard faculty. Intellectually he is, at the age of eighty-five, the liveliest, the most supple, the youngest of the lot. I quote some characteristic observations, gathered from his talk at the Society and elsewhere:

"Two people saved England (with a smile): Joan of Arc and George Washington. If it hadn't been for the first, the capital of England would have been in France; if it hadn't been for the other, it would have been in America."

"In the development of modern science, the Industrial Revolution should logically have come in the ancient world, after the rise of Alexandria. I have often wondered why ancient science stopped with Archimedes, and I've come to the conclusion that it's because people stopped asking foolish questions."

"One must not be too sensible. I have a feeling John Dewey is too sensible, and accepts facts at their face value. He reminds me of the Chinese, who have always been a very sensible people. For example, they knew that the lodestone pointed north. But, being sensible, they accepted it as an accomplished fact and never asked why. The Europeans by contrast were poets; their imaginations were restless and roaming. They asked why, and then they invented the compass."

"The Orientals are what they are now because they lacked the extraordinary good fortune of having a Greece somewhere in their past. We should be much the same, though perhaps more restless by nature, had there not been the accident of Greece."

"Almost all we have of any real and lasting value has come to us from Greece. We should be better had we kept a bit more."

Plato is Mr. Whitehead's favorite philosopher, and he delights in talking about him; his conversation is full of variations on his famous statement that all Western philosophy consists in a series of footnotes to Plato. "When I was working at London I had to take many long bus rides and I used to amuse myself, as I sat on the top of the bus, by imagining the great figures of the past, one after another, as my companions, and wondering what they would think of what they saw about them. Of these Plato, I decided, would be the least interesting, for he would be so excited by the modern discoveries in mathematics that he would have no time or attention for anything else.

"Of all the men of whom we have any adequate record, Plato, I think, had the finest

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mind. Of all philosophers, he was the least dogmatic; he was a great poet. Philosophy at its greatest is poetry, and necessitates aesthetic apprehension. Plato had no *system*. Aristotle, on the other hand, was the father of systematization. Now Aristotle was a much-needed man; science, for example, would have been impossible without him. Yet systematization, by its definition, presupposes a mind fixed on a specific series of abstractions, and directed to a specific aim; as such, it can become outmoded by other abstractions and aims. The nineteenth century doctrine of evolution would have horrified Aristotle, with his notion of fixed species; I believe Plato would have welcomed it with delight."

"The greatest revolution in *scientific* thought has come during the past fifty years in physics and mathematics. It has taught us the childishness of nineteenth-century materialism, it has taught us the reality of value. It has led us back to Plato."

An elderly scholar asked, "What's more important, Mr. Whitehead, *ideas* or *things*?" Whitehead replied, "Why, I should imagine ideas *about* things."

A loose-minded member of the Society said that he was glad he had not yet had to face the problem of considering a Negro as a member. Whitehead: "I should be ashamed to consider it a problem."

"The English never discard anything. If they find something no longer useful, they put it in cold storage, like the House of Lords, until they chance to find it useful again for some purpose."

"I increasingly have the feeling that the Russian Revolution was badly needed."

"In America the representatives of the public are inferior to the average person, while in England the politician is a fair sample of the population. The historian of America will be false to the truth if he is a historian of politics, for he will be quite unfair to the average citizen, who is so superior to the politician."

"Everything depends on the next twenty years in America."

III

But a few scattered recollections such as these can no more give an impression of Mr. Whitehead's full character and personality as shown in his talk than a single line can adequately portray a human face. One needs to be aware of his philosophy, his background, his values, his appearance, if one is even to begin to understand the mystery of so complete and shining a character, to relish and appreciate so very special an embodiment of wisdom, and to realize what an extraordinary good fortune it is to know so rare a flowering of tradition into personality, so rich and delightful an epitome of things great and good.

This is the second in the series of AMERICAN SCHOLAR PORTRAITS. Others will follow regularly.

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CAN GOVERNMENT PRACTICE GOOD MEDICINE?

Government Can Practice Good Medicine

Cyril Solomon

It should be a democratic principle that all people have an equal opportunity to good health. Nobody in medicine will deny the value of that principle. More, all of us in medicine have one large area of agreement. We agree that medical science has made tremendous strides. We agree on the common desire to give broad and efficient medical service. We agree on the real good will of most of the individuals and groups who are debating medicine in the atomic age.

We also have a major area of disagreement. We disagree on how to get what we want — good health for everybody. But a large number of us feel that there are innumerable big, plainly-written signposts pointing the way — signposts created by history and brilliantly lighted by World War II.

The war taught us the value of the unity of all social and biological sciences. The American Medical Association itself finally — at its recent San Francisco convention — recognized that the sociologist and economist must be welcomed by organized medicine. This same unity is necessary on all levels of front-line medical practice. Medicine has become too big, too specialized, too mechanical for one man to contain within himself all that is needed to treat the patient satisfactorily. The conclusion, it seems to me, is inevitable: *It is a logical development for men to practice in groups. It is upon group practice as the unit that the future medical whole will be built.* But the only way in which group practice can really be effective is for government, as the implementing arm of democracy, to step in and help make it work.

That is the focal point for disagreement. Many of us say that government can practice good medicine. We say there can't be much question about that — because government is now in the practice of medicine. And the

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United States isn't even a new hand at it. It started practice in 1798 with the Sailor's Act. Now, approximately one-fourth of hospital beds are in federal, state, county or municipal hospitals. Twelve million veterans and some of their families are now by law entitled to medical care supplied by government funds. The functions of sewage disposal, infant care, water supply and public health have been governmental responsibilities for decades. Government has become the custodian of several diseases — mental disease, tuberculosis, leprosy, venereal disease, the exanthemata. It is becoming more active in arthritis and cancer. Can it be that these diseases are so chronic and so expensive that the patient is rendered medically indigent and can no longer afford the private practitioner?

It is the efficient extension of medical care which is needed. It must come through government. The doctor has been conducting guerilla warfare against disease, and like all guerilla fighters, is suspicious of integrated social attack. But now a more precise and organized use of their weapons is called for. The profession, to be sure, is not ready for revolutionary change. The need must be clarified, the process prepared for. Then cooperation on the part of most physicians is certain. The community has trained doctors for service, and service is the tradition of the profession. They will respond.

Preventive, diagnostic and curative medicine should be for all people who need it, regardless of economic station. The scope of care must be nation-wide and should include all of the population without the degrading "means" test. Every country where universal medical insurance plans have been in force has broadened the coverage. This is true in Canada, New Zealand, England and Sweden. There should be no need for the present duality of medical care: on the one hand a system supported by taxation and philanthropy, and on the other hand a system paid for by the individual or the insurance premium he can afford to buy.

Proper care for all must be determined on the basis of the area to be covered. The country has been divided into twelve zones by the Social Security Board. The Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill uses these already existing setups as administrative bases, in order to avoid duplicating bureaucracies. These twelve areas can be subdivided into functional local areas, according to the density of population and the facilities for transportation.

It is obvious that functional zoning may include one or several cities, parts of states or counties. It decentralizes control of the health service and often will make the doctor freer of the mayor or county commissioner than he is at present. This local responsibility must be explicit. The bill introduced in the Seventy-eighth Congress gave too much power to the central authority, and was amended in the Seventy-ninth Congress. Even more decentralization is necessary, although cooperation with existing political units is of course essential, too.

The policy-making body should be formed by representatives of the public and of those groups who supply the services — doctors, hospital administration, sanitation engineers and health authorities. On the community level, similar groups can be formed to work within the national standards. In England, the Health Bill suggests a group of eight, six of whom are doctors. Five of these, in turn, must be in the active practice of medicine.

In the organization of care, the well-equipped hospital is the institutional focal point. The hospital under optimum conditions should be large enough to support all of the services. The network of roads, modern ambulances and the airplane ambulance make possible as bases large hospitals. Smaller satellite hospitals in less populated districts, town and village hospitals, and even small diagnostic clinics in the sparsely settled Dakotas and Montana would also be needed.

Such a program requires a large expenditure, which must be integrated by need. At present the larger, better-equipped hospitals are in the metropolitan centers. In cities 507 beds are available for 100,000 people, while in non-metropolitan areas only 247 beds are available for 100,000 people. To compound the felony, most of the 3,000 unrecognized smaller hospitals are in rural centers and do

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not supply adequate facilities. The American Hospital Association has stated the need for 166,000 beds in general hospitals; 196,000 beds for mental hospitals; and 60,000 for tuberculosis. Only the federal government can supply this need. To cover it, Congress has passed the Hill-Burton Bill for hospitalization. This bill had the American Medical Association seal of approval; again the government was welcomed into medical care. The voluntary hospitals have done and are doing a magnificent job; they should form a part of an integrated medical system. But it should be repugnant for a hospital, as for an individual, to rely for its existence upon private charity.

In addition to hospitals, which are really disease centers, health centers should cover the country. These may be under the same roof as the hospitals and diagnostic clinics, or not — as local conditions dictate. In rural areas where the general practitioner serves as health officer, consultative health service may be all that is necessary. Twelve hundred counties have no permanent public health system, and many of the remaining 1,800 have inadequate services. Grants-in-aid to the states have been proposed. Again the government is involved, to the benefit and with the approval of organized medicine.

We have entered an era of man-made disease. Industrial hygiene is assuming vast importance. Yet in a survey of clinics, only one in Massachusetts was found which devoted itself wholly or largely to these victims of industrialization. That workmen's compensation is a governmental responsibility is manifest in the laws, passed by thirty-eight states, that recognize certain illnesses as compensable. Ten years ago only five states had such laws. Again we find government in medical care, to the benefit and with the approval of organized medicine.

To implement a nation-wide program, we must have not only a sufficient number of doctors and members of the allied professions, but ones who are qualitatively satisfactory. The Russian system of turning out doctors after only two full years of medicine merely better distributes poor medicine. In a vain attempt to overcome this handicap, the Russians have introduced a method of specialized consultation. Quality must be maintained, and improved in quantity. The doctor must be assured professional stimulations, the right to decent living and working facilities, opportunity for post-graduate study, a sense of security through adequate remuneration, and freedom — freedom to accept or reject patients and freedom for experimentation.

The presence of hospital and diagnostic facilities will prevent the migration of some physicians from professional fields made sterile by geography. A national plan will supply adequate compensation, which will make it more attractive for men to stay in economically depressed areas. The need for physicians is dire in some of these areas. In one Southern state one doctor serves 3,000 patients, while the average for its cities is one doctor for 750 patients. The national average for metropolitan areas is 190 physicians for 100,000 people and for non-metropolitan areas, 92 doctors for 100,000 people.

Moreover, economic resources determine the number of physicians. In the United States an average of 133 doctors are in practice for every 100,000 of population. In states where the per capita salary is under $600 per year, there are 93 doctors for every 100,000 population. And disease is more prevalent in the lower income groups. Government must enter medicine here to subsidize rural physician service. If a basic salary is assured a young doctor, he can go to a rural community and live where his potential patients live.

Payment of such a medical program should be national. Prepayment plans have been recently endorsed by organized medicine and all others interested in medical economies. Moreover, insurance actuaries insist that the broader the coverage, the sounder the policy. This type of insurance payment is not a dole: it protects the people's income and the standard of their living. Much of the money now spent for medical care will be redistributed by way of the United States Treasury, rather than by the present route. Sickness and unemployment are cyclic. If the doctor is told that his bill cannot be paid until next year, it merely means that

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the doctor is carrying the patient's insurance. The prepayment can be paid as a tax on the net earned income, as proposed in the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill, or out of general tax funds, or both. Of course, the individual could buy private medical care if he wished, just as he can now send his son to a preparatory school instead of the nearby high school. The patient would have free choice of this doctor, or any other one he wanted, without depriving the doctor of enough to survive.

The doctor can be paid in four ways. The first is a fee-for-service method, which is the most common in this country. The second is a full-time salary. Another plan would work by capitation, which means payment by the number of individuals served rather than by the number of visits. The fourth plan is any combination of the previous three — most likely a basic salary plus capitation or fee-for-service.

If basic salary plus capitation is chosen by the medical society (the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill permits each local society to choose its method of payment), the doctor has a greater stake in keeping the patient well and reducing the number of visits. This plan also avoids the tendency to replace competition for patients by competition to avoid patients. Under such a system of payment, the doctor will be paid for his large measure of free practice.

Most medical advances have been in the laboratory rather than in the clinical fields. Yet laboratory medicine is the tool of philanthropy; any government plan will have to include grants for research. Men who work in laboratories are woefully underpaid at present. In spite of this they are daily advancing medicine. The quality of the able man will not vary, whether paid by public or private funds.

Again, under any good system of medicine the general practitioner will assume his rightful role. His will be the first contact with the patient; his desk will be the place of judgment. The specialist will be one of his tools — like the tongue-blade, only noisier. The general practitioner will be to the specialist as the President is to his cabinet. The opportunity for consultation will give the necessary and overburdened practitioner a sense of security.

The future of medical care is a grave problem which will not be settled without mistakes, without bitterness, without emotion. A change must be made. Although our mortality statistics suggest a high level of health, the Selective Service examinations show that we are not a robust people. No one method can be either salvation or perdition. All methods should be subject to change. Without it, there can be no progress.

To us who want government's help, the change seems the most natural, the easiest possible. It is simply a logical extension of existing forms. It is a sound drawing of conclusions from a well-demonstrated body of facts. I believe that our title should be "The Government Can Provide Better Medical Care." I feel that asking "Can Government Practice Good Medicine?" is exactly like asking "Can Government Run a Post Office?" It has demonstrated that it can — and does. Medical science has been one of the most dynamic of all sciences. Its usage must be dynamic, too. The opposite point of view resembles insisting that a Flying Fortress run only along a dirt, backwoods road — and never be allowed in the air.

Government medicine has been attacked as "political medicine," "socialized medicine." The comparison is obvious: so was the post office. And has anybody and can anybody attack the Manhattan Project and the A-Bomb as "political science," "socialized science"? The fact that a government department controls the finances of any plan is no proof that the department in question should control the individuals paid by it. What kind of *ipso facto* reasoning is it that says that all government employees are black-hearted and block-headed?

Broad national planning does not mean dictatorship. Mammoth public utilities once thought that way when the Tennessee Valley Authority was created. They don't think that way any more. Is medical service to be judged less important than an electric light in every kitchen or a toilet in every house?

This nation's medical needs must be met. Hand medicine the right kind of prospectus, and the job will be done.

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The Need for a Free Profession

James E. Bryan

After a half-century of revolutionary progress in medical science, the American physician is today the acknowledged world leader in his profession. Yet few physicians would claim that the profession has registered a comparable progress in applying socially the arts and modalities of medical science.

That the science of medicine has outstripped its application is perhaps only another aspect of the general time lag in the operation of what we call the social sciences as against the growth of their knowledge contents. If this be so, nevertheless, it cannot be accepted as a confession that governmental intervention is desirable in the field of medical care. For government itself can scarcely be considered free of a time lag between discovery and application.

In testifying before the U. S. Senate Committee on Education and Labor *pro* compulsory sickness insurance, a no less eminent practitioner of government than the Hon. F. H. La Guardia said recently that "medicine has already made such progress that it could stop today and do nothing for fifty years, and government couldn't catch up!" Yet Mr. La Guardia was supporting a proposal whereby the federal government would take over medicine — lock, stock and barrel.

The question before us might be restated in these terms: Can the federal government provide as good medical care, and maintain as effective incentives and as favorable conditions for the continued improvement of medical care, as now exist without governmental operation and control? To this question, if it can be accepted as a reasonable definition of the issue, our answer must be — no!

Representative democracy is our accepted method of determining broad social policy. But dare we feel an equal confidence in the ability of any federal agency to administer, with reasonable satisfaction to the public, an intimate personal service operating in every nook and cranny of our continent? Time and again in such essential matters as national defense, labor-management relations, wage and price control, food rationing, housing, distribution of surplus materials — to mention only a few instances — our federal government, however laudable its objectives, has so botched the job with legislative inconsistencies, political compromises and administrative confusion, as to create more problems than have been solved.

The issue, therefore, is not whether an *ideal* central government might satisfactorily operate our medical services, but rather: Can we safely entrust the most vital service in our private lives to the demonstrated administrative incapacities of our present federal establishment?

We have spoken of "revolutionary progress in medical science." Such progress in the past implies, if it does not promise, more revolutionary development in the future. Medicine and its allied or contributory sciences must remain free of the shackles that inevitably accompany governmental operation. For when idealistic social purposes have been legislated into bureaucratic mechanisms, practices and policies tend to harden into nationally standardized patterns. Flexibility is lost, and any revolutionary revisions dictated by new knowledge are anathema to the harried administrators of an increasingly sclerotic system. Thus, government medicine, which in its conceptual stages was a rallying point of liberalism, becomes at last a lumbering vehicle of moribund reaction.

The most important contribution government could make to good medical care would be to preserve a milieu of freedom, in which medicine may continue every decade or two to change its skin — casting off once hal-

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lowed principles of therapy in favor of newer methods that have triumphantly discredited the older ideas.

The two principal forms of federal medicine usually advocated by those who urge state intervention are national compulsory sickness insurance, and outright state medicine with every physician a salaried agent of government.

National compulsory sickness insurance was first instituted in Germany in 1883 by Bismarck, who was inspired by that single device to steal the thunder of the rising Social Democratic Party and to bind the working classes to the fortunes of his regime. In 1911, Lloyd George and the Liberal Party followed suit in England, possibly again for motives not unmixed.

A voluminous and extremely dull "literature" on the successes and shortcomings of these two foreign programs will yield ample evidence to the proponents on either side of the controversy in America. But we are not concerned with the question whether German or English sickness insurance has benefited Germans or Englishmen. Rather, we should ask whether any conceivable plan of sickness insurance could enable American physicians to render better medical care to American patients? We shall concede that almost any plan of compulsory sickness insurance would result in *more* people receiving *more* medical care than they receive today without such a program. The same advantage can be claimed for *voluntary* prepayment plans.

But it is my conviction that under compulsory sickness insurance the public would receive medical service of a quality and efficacy inferior to that which most people receive today, and that this service would become progressively more inferior to that which a free medical profession will be capable of providing in the future.

The universal tendency of compulsory sickness insurance, conceded even by its more candid proponents, is to increase the incidence of sickness. There arises a variety of ulterior and sometimes conflicting interests among the three parties at interest: the patient, the doctor and the governmental administrator. The patient, having paid a considerable special tax, desires to collect his benefits in the form of personal services, whether or not his state of health really demands the ministrations of a doctor. Occasionally, the patient will want an extended certificate of disability, enabling him to collect cash sickness benefits while he is idle.

The American doctor, always a busy enough fellow, will be constantly harassed by the excessive demands of insured hypochondriacs, insured malingerers and insured people of all kinds merely seeking reassurance. But the demand for unnecessary service will be sharply countered if the physician is paid a state salary or a per capita annual allowance for each patient on his panel (the latter being the method generally followed in England). In this event, even the most conscientious physician will be tempted to render his insured patients the least amount of service he can offer without official censure, and to hospitalize every insured patient whose hospitalization he can justify, in order to rid himself of responsibility for that patient and the burden of his care.

If, on the other hand, the doctor is paid according to the "fee-for-service" plan (as would undoubtedly be preferred by the majority of American practitioners), the inevitable tendency will be to give the insured patient more treatment than is strictly necessary. And this tendency will be compounded by the patient's desire for "free" care.

The inclination to overtreat the patient is easily and quite honestly rationalized when it inflicts no hardship upon the patient. It would be moderated, however, to some extent by other new factors, such as the time required of the practitioner to make out the numerous exhaustive reports which any government agency requires before it can or will disburse public funds. These time-consuming tasks will, of course, diminish the medical man-hours available for care of seriously ill patients.

Obviously, excessive disbursements for malingering patients receiving excessive attention from certain physicians will have an unfortunate effect both upon the actuarial

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basis of the plan and upon the capacity of the trust funds to support the expensive facilities and services required by those who are dangerously sick.

The government agencies in charge of the system — assuming that successive Congresses will readily authorize the deficiency appropriations invariably required by these "insurance" plans — will find it necessary continually to tighten and extend the "rules and regulations" which are the inescapable curse of every social legislative program. Certain doctors make too many calls. Very well, set a limit to the number of visits authorized under each common diagnosis. Certain patients want to "shop around" for a physician who will accommodate them more often for "sick certificates." All right, make it illegal to change doctors without the consent of the area superintendent. Certain physicians are using streptomycin or some other new and costly drug more frequently than the budget will permit. Soon thereafter no more prescriptions will be honored for payment if they call for drugs other than those admitted to the U. S. Pharmacopoeia (or some other standard list).

So it will go — regulation piled upon regulation, rule upon irritating rule. It is characteristic of most social legislation of this kind that while the enabling act is written upon the implicit assumption that every citizen is an intelligent fellow of impregnable integrity, the ever-multiplying rules and regulations seem to imply that the beneficiaries and participants in the program are morons or criminals.

To obliterate all direct financial responsibility on the part of the patient toward the doctor can only result in depreciating medical service in the eyes of its beneficiaries. The patient's estimate of the value of his doctor's services sometimes has a direct bearing upon its therapeutic effectiveness. For medical care, in its essence, is not a commodity to be packed on shelves and bargained for over a counter. It is a highly personal relationship in which the attitude of the patient, the quality of his insight, the extent of his education, and the keenness of his will to recovery — all have a bearing upon the result of the interaction.

It is often claimed for compulsory sickness insurance that it will encourage preventive medicine. Yet, actually few of the insured people in insurance countries are found to seek medical care early in event of a threatened illness. This observation is undoubtedly related to that general depreciation of medical service in the public esteem which we have already noted as a tendency. There is frequently evidence of a popular lack of confidence in the judgment of physicians who practice under the government plan. Most American doctors believe that a more general and intelligent use of preventive medicine waits upon more effective public education as to the services and facilities already available in most communities, and a more informed appreciation of their potential benefits.

Our discussion of the ubiquitous "rules and regulations" that inevitably accumulate in and around such a social mechanism as a state medical plan raises the paramount question of *control*. For of all forms of social security, sickness insurance involves controls of the most obvious, palpable and intimate kinds.

If the federal government collects compulsory taxes from the workers and guarantees them complete medical care, then the government must control the medical profession to ascertain that these benefits will be delivered. It must also control the worker to guard against his abusing or neglecting his privileges. The federal controls imposed upon the people in wartime were mild and remote compared to those they must anticipate under a federal medical plan.

To be ultimately satisfactory, any government-operated plan of medical service must maintain qualitative standards of professional performance. It must preserve a reasonable degree of freedom for the exercise of medical judgment and action. It must respect the inviolability of the private relationship between patient and doctor. It must safeguard flexibility for the growth and revolution of medical science and its practical application as a social art. It must uphold the prestige of medicine as an independent profession that will continue to attract the finest caliber of young people as a calling.

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And it must respect the wide variations in local customs, needs and conditions, through the greatest possible decentralization of control.

This is a prescription which "Uncle Sam, M.D.," would be sorely extended to compound, if his efforts to date in social engineering can be accepted as a measure of his powers. Most American physicians oppose federalized medical care because they instinctively feel that a bureaucracy of the scope required for this job could produce nothing but mediocrity and uniformity. Both are radically antithetical to the dynamic spirit of medical progress that has prospered through free inquiry and individual responsibility in American medicine.

The medical profession is actively promoting local programs of *voluntary* non-profit medical-care insurance, through the Blue Cross hospital plans and medical prepayment plans now developing in every part of the United States. These plans deserve a fair and exhaustive trial before we resort to federal compulsion. They are flexible, self-supporting plans operated and controlled by local citizens, and adapted to local needs. Each is susceptible of endless improvement, utilizing the lessons learned by its counterparts in neighboring states and communities.

This is not to assert that there are not legitimate methods by which the federal government can aid the medical profession to practice better medicine and extend its services to more people. It is a fact not generally appreciated, that the medical profession has endorsed four of the five points of President Truman's national health program. These four proposals are for expansion of existing public health services, including maternal and child health programs; a federal-state program for construction and maintenance of a nationwide network of hospitals, health centers and diagnostic clinics — now happily enacted into law; establishment of universal insurance protection against loss of family income when the breadwinner is ill or disabled by conditions not covered by workmen's compensation laws; and the provision of additional support for medical research and medical education through the proposed National Research Foundation.

Here is a very respectable program. If it were strenuously developed it would constructively occupy all our medical resources and talent for years to come. Its successful realization, moreover, would perhaps permanently obviate all plausible need for such dubious prescriptions as national compulsory sickness insurance.

Adequate Medical Care for the Community

I. Ogden Woodruff

Because of the limitation of space, the other participants in this forum have been obliged to address themselves directly to the pros and cons of the question posed. They and the Editor have courteously permitted me to approach the subject in a way to bring into relief the complexity of the problem of providing medical care for the entire population, and the present day deficiencies to be overcome before we can achieve adequate medical care for the community. In this connection, the term "adequate" characterizes that medical care which meets a reasonable standard of sufficiency not only in the extent of its distribution but in the quality of service rendered.

While I propose to outline briefly the problems involved in furnishing medical and health services to all the people in this country, in the title I have deliberately used the

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more restricted word "community" to indicate the level of political and social subdivision of population at which most of the patterns of distribution of services have to be determined. With attention thus focused, the reader's general knowledge enables him to realize immediately the multiplicity of interdependent local factors which in synthesis influence the position as to relative urgency or importance in a community of the various medical needs pressing for solution everywhere. It also enables him to realize that much flexibility in the patterns of service distribution is essential in order to achieve optimum results through adaptability to varying local conditions. Thus, for example, though their problems are those of rural medicine, the needs of the relatively densely populated and highly literate rural New England communities are best met by service patterns which cannot be adapted either to the sparsely settled rural areas of the Southwest or to the more closely populated but relatively illiterate areas of the South.

Society has long accepted as part of its philosophy the responsibility of furnishing medical service to the indigent. During the depression, when most families not on relief were near the indigent level, there emerged a philosophy now generally accepted: that medical service should be available to all citizens, regardless of economic status. Studies made at that time among low-income groups revealed the deplorable fact that while suffering more illness than those more fortunately situated financially, actually they were receiving less medical care. Thus, it was with reference to the *amount* of medical care these groups received that the term "inadequacy" was applied. In most discussions since then, it has been with the extent of distribution and the number of kinds of service rendered that the term "adequate" has been associated, rather than with the standard of quality of service rendered.

This concept of inadequacy, together with overemphasis of the economic aspects of the subject, has created among the public the erroneous but ever growing belief that the solution of the problem of providing medical care to the people consists in providing adequate facilities and then in removing the economic barriers which previously stood between certain segments of the population and medical service. This belief is reflected in the Hill-Burton Bill, which is drawn to remedy deficiencies in facilities; and also in that section of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill which aims at distributing the costs of illness.

The public has little realization of the qualitative deficiencies of medical service today. Even in the medical profession there are many who have no knowledge of the factors involved, or of what we must do to keep our quantitative extension of medical care from meaning only more poor medical care for more poor people. In any overall plan of furnishing medical service to the community, it is of paramount importance that at every stage of its development it give satisfactory evidence of maintaining in its operation an adequate standard of quality. This transcends in importance how the service is to be delivered, paid for or controlled; in achieving these secondary aims (largely administrative or dealing with the mechanics of operation), we must guard against employing any pattern of service which lacks flexibility and which may lower the standard of quality of care rendered.

Probably our most serious deficiency and one which is far too general is in the quality of professional service rendered. While one must guard against generalization, I believe that the inadequacy of our clinical training program is largely responsible — for at the undergraduate level both the caliber of the students and the quality of training received is far superior to those of a quarter of a century ago. In an article in the issue of *New York Medicine* for October 5, 1946, the subject is developed in the detail that its importance deserves. Its remedy is the joint responsibility of our hospitals and medical schools, but there are many decisions to be made even before we can determine the type of clinical training most desirable.

The next deficiency has to do with the time lag in the application of medical discoveries by many physicians. This could be helped by the provision of sufficient facilities and that type of hospital service organization which would extend to more practicing physicians

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the opportunity to keep abreast of the progress of medical science through participating and collaborating in the application of its discoveries.

The third deficiency has to do with the inaccuracy of many of the laboratory determinations, reports of which are furnished to physicians. Much of this work is so inaccurate as to be practically worthless, but unfortunately few physicians have enough experience to enable them to evaluate these laboratory findings critically. Improvement can be achieved only by the better training of technicians and chemists, raising the standards of laboratory practice, and remedying the present lack of expert supervision and direction in the laboratory field.

The fourth is the glaring inadequacy, particularly below the state level, of most of the public health services. In terms of increased morbidity and mortality, their inefficiency is responsible for much unnecessary suffering and sorrow, when thought of in relation to a population of 140,000,000 people. Little can be accomplished in this field except by raising the standards of qualification for office, and by offering a remuneration sufficient to attract more competent physicians to the public health field. In addition, the positions must be removed from the influence of political patronage. It is in this sphere that much aid can be obtained from the federal government.

The fifth is deficiency in nursing personnel. The problem is most complicated, involving economic and political factors as well as training policies. Nursing shortage is serious even at present. If not remedied to meet the demand for projected new hospital facilities, the breakdown in service will be dangerous.

While these are the chief defects affecting the quality of medical service today, only by planning can we avoid creating further deficiencies in the future. Thus, for example, we must begin to see to it that our new hospitals under the Hill-Burton Bill are competently and economically administered, apart from any question of professional service rendered. At present, in the whole country there are not enough men trained in hospital management to staff administratively the new hospitals we have authorized. Men of the proper caliber are not going into the field unless appointment to these positions is removed from political control, and proper standards of qualification are set up and guarded by civil service. Also, the remuneration offered must be commensurate with the responsibilities of the office. In addition, by the time these hospital facilities are created, some plan must be successfully in operation which will attract to the rural areas (where most of these hospitals will be located) not only these competent administrators, but also sufficient physicians of the proper caliber to staff the facilities.

Also — looking to the future in order to keep coming physicians in tune with the trends of the best medical and social thought — despite the overburdened curriculum of the medical schools, we need a broadening of undergraduate medical education; more emphasis on the application of preventive medicine to the individual; a better training in psychosomatic medicine; an improvement of the student's sociologic attitude, and a sufficient humanizing of his scientific training to make certain that the student is graduated with a concern for the patient as a person, not merely a case of illness.

Finally, we must realize not only that the public has a right to medical service of high caliber, but that only by developing and maintaining that high caliber will the practice of medicine maintain a scientific and humanitarian appeal. And only that appeal will assure an adequate and continuous flow of medical school matriculants with a high degree of mental competence and possessed of those ideals and qualities of character and cultural backgrounds which will safeguard the continuance of strong ethical and professional standards — without which the word "service" in medicine has no meaning.

If we are to enable the public to get the maximum benefit out of medical service provided, we will also need to educate the people better in the matter of conserving and maintaining health as individuals and in the knowledge of the extent and effective use of existing medical resources.

Much of the debate on how better medical care may be made available to the public has overlooked the need for the adaptation

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of any plan (as well as its modus operandi) to individual factors peculiar to an area, community or group. It has also almost completely ignored the crucial significance of these general factors just listed — the failure to accomplish which will make impossible the provision of good medical care under any plan. Obviously, the accomplishment of any of the goals listed will be a gradual process covering a period of years; the problem of how to give the best medical care, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to the American people can be solved only on the basis of the experimental approach and without dislocating or disrupting present medical services in the process.

As we progress, we wish to eliminate the deficiencies of today's medical service — for which the profession itself has much responsibility. I oppose the compulsory insurance section of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill. Not only do I believe it would make the elimination of deficiencies in quality more difficult, but also that the very principles it embodies show that Congress fails to grasp the bigness and complexity of the problem. Therefore, I maintain that government should not be entrusted with that degree of control of medical service which must accompany its operation.

This is not to say that government has no place in the medicine of the future. It has a large place, but not in any administrative capacity in which its influence may be strong enough to determine policies that may adversely affect the quality of medical service. It must contribute funds generously to support medical service, for good medical service is not cheap, although — even when gratis — poor medical service is always dear. Much of government's contribution, in my opinion, should be in the form of grants-in-aid to be expended at the local level, though well safeguarded. In rural medicine and public health, large sums are needed to insure satisfactory service.

In my opinion, government could also wisely spend much money in the field of clinical training after graduation. Much of the curtailment of training here is on an economic basis, and support to the physician in the second and third year of training would be richly rewarded through his increased value to society on its completion. Grants for research to medical schools in increasing amounts are going to be needed, but only if the schools are safeguarded from political pressure exerted toward taking substandard applicants, and in general preserve their intellectual independence.

Voluntary health insurance now defrays some portion of the cost of medical care for 23,000,000 people in this country. We shall need the government to underwrite some of the cost of this insurance for the lower income groups on the verge of, or in the class of, medical indigency, as well as to assume responsibility for the indigent among our population. It should also furnish funds for experiments in the field of prepaid medical insurance at various levels and in various communities under various conditions. These experiments would finally enable us to ascertain what type of medical service is best suited to particular segments of the population, and to particular areas.

I think the foregoing picture is sufficiently staggering, both quantitatively and qualitatively, to make one realize that the job calls for the best brains, not only in medicine, but in all of the sciences with which it should be integrated. It needs the guiding hands of experts operating with genuine freedom. The freedom is necessary to insure not only adequate medical care to the community now, but also to insure that flexibility of pattern necessary for its adaptation to changing medical and social concepts.

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Rebuttals

James E. Bryan

Where Doctor Solomon stresses the need of a broader and more equitable distribution of medical care, his colleague, Doctor Woodruff, emphasizes the importance of improving the quality or effectiveness of such medical care as we have. With most of Dr. Woodruff's contentions any reasonable person must agree, but many laymen are justifiably impatient with what seems to them a tendency among doctors to reiterate the complexity of the problem for the unconfessed purpose of discouraging all social action in medical reform.

The five specific deficiencies discussed by Doctor Woodruff amply prove his dissatisfaction with American medicine as it is practiced today. His five remedies comprise, in my judgment, a program worthy of interest and support among doctors and their patients alike. Dr. Woodruff's paper also suggests that he believes in the encouragement of group practice — a rapidly growing form of medical practice which promises both to improve the efficiency of medical service and to reduce the cost of care to the patient. Moreover, group practice is readily adaptable to voluntary prepayment plans. The future of group practice, however, like most other really hopeful developments in medical practice would be dubious indeed if the federal government were to take over, as Doctor Solomon proposes.

Doctor Solomon apparently believes that our existing federal establishment could be expected to practice good medicine. He cites as an example of government in medicine, the adoption (with the American Medical Association's blessing) of the Hill-Burton Bill. While the implementing of this measure is still in the planning stage, it by no means places the federal government in the *practice* of medicine. It merely authorizes grants-in-aid of the several states to construct hospitals and health centers, with their operation and control to be vested in local authorities.

Similarly the Wagner-Murray-Dingell proposal to convey grants to the states for improvement of existing public health services (which also received AMA support) would not involve the government in the control or operation of actual medical practice.

Workmen's compensation laws are also unacceptable as instances of government in the practice of medicine. Here, the state governments have merely enforced upon employers a responsibility for providing medical care for injured employees. The profession supports this and urges a national system of monetary compensation for time lost through non-industrial accidents or sickness (another provision of the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill).

There are, nevertheless, certain areas of medical care in which government, at various levels, is engaged in actual practice. Doctor Solomon mentions, as examples of state medicine, the care of certain specific diseases, such as tuberculosis, mental health, venereal disease, etc. Also, the government has accepted responsibility for care of certain groups of the population, such as veterans and welfare clients.

But in each of these cases, there was some special ulterior reason for governmental intervention. Tuberculosis, for example, has become more of a social or public health problem than a medical one. The state cannot permit tuberculous people to mingle with the general population, and the individual patient can seldom afford the long period of sanatorium rest required to overcome his infection. Hence, the state must assume care of the tuberculous patient — but for other than medical reasons. The same is true, largely, for other disease entities for which the state has accepted responsibility. Simi-

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larly, veterans, indigent families and people suffering from various special disabilities are cared for by the state, but for special reasons that do not apply to the general population.

In most instances where the government, at whatever level, has gone into the practice of general medicine, its record has not been one to inspire confidence in the proposition that the government can *practice good medicine*. Consider the medical care program of the Veterans Administration during the interval between the wars. Salaries paid to physicians in VA hospitals were quite insufficient to attract well-trained doctors. New hospitals were allocated not according to need or accessibility to civilian medical resources, but wherever it would benefit a favored politician to have them erected. The entire VA medical service was operated in virtual isolation from civilian medical centers. No young physician could afford to take his postgraduate training in a VA hospital. Clinical results, as reported by many investigators, were notably inferior to those recorded in civilian medicine.

Under the direction of General Paul R. Hawley, VA medical services have been transformed in the past year. How? By throwing political considerations and civil service regulations to the winds. The ablest private medical talent in the country has been enlisted, both for the care of the veterans and for the training of fledgling doctors. General Hawley and his boss, VA Administrator General Omar Bradley, have incurred the bitter enmity of the old line bureaucrats and politicians for whom VA was once a happy hunting ground. They have redeemed a state medicine project by converting it into a cooperative program, and they have earned and obtained the enthusiasic participation of the private profession.

On the state level, government medicine offers us the disgraceful spectacle of the state mental hospitals, and "state medicine" at the municipal level is scarcely better off. In New York City, with the greatest concentration of medical resources and talent in the world, doctors and nurses working in city hospitals, in school health services, cardiac and eye clinics, venereal, tuberculosis and pediatric clinics operated by the City Health Department are paid ridiculous fees and salaries. The per capita health budget remains about 75¢ — one-half what any community should pay for health protection. What reason have we to suppose that comprehensive government medicine would be any more adequately supported on a national scale than are most existing civilian services of government?

With most of the objectives of Doctor Solomon's thesis there can be no disagreement. But the practical question before us is whether the federal government can deliver more *and better* medical care to the general population, and maintain an environment in medicine conducive to the continued development of the arts and sciences of medicine. I believe that every valid social objective of medical service can be achieved more satisfactorily and soundly through voluntary action, with state or local aid and encouragement — perhaps even with federal subsidy — than by federal operation or control. In view of the impressive record of the independent medical profession on the one hand, and the not-so-impressive record of federal administrative bureaucracies on the other, it seems to me that the burden of proof rests upon those who would have the federal government take over.

I. Ogden Woodruff

In comment on the arguments raised by Dr. Solomon and Mr. Bryan for or against the question, "Can Government Practice Good Medicine?", I might say that one rather outstanding lack in both papers is that of factual data in support of their theses. The farthest Dr. Solomon gets is to say that government is increasingly participating in the field of medicine; and Mr. Bryan, even in his analogy, chooses in support of his argument examples of ineptitude of government control in other fields. It seems to me that there are a number of data that can be cited which, though we still may have to reason by analogy, are somewhat more cogent arguments in that they occur in the medical field itself.

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Dr. Solomon has unwittingly used one argument against himself when he speaks of the inadequacy of the public health services throughout the country. True, he may contrast the services at the county level with a much more efficient administration in the field of the United States Public Health Service. However, this shining example does not bear very much weight because, as opposed to it, until recently the government did nothing for years — and despite protests over a long period — to remedy the almost scandalous conditions in the Veterans Administration, where politically entrenched ignorance and ineptitude at the top had its counterpart at all levels of medical care both in policy and operation.

Moreover, some historical knowledge will show that in the field of public health administration, in which government has always had complete control both as to policies and personnel, during the last half century scarcely a single application of our knowledge in the public health field has been made without much pressure from voluntary health groups. In fact, these latter came into being largely through the inertia and inefficiency of public health medicine. Even today, to give one example, this mass X raying of which we read was initiated through the vision of voluntary health agencies. It is well known that many patients with minimal tuberculosis are discovered, in whom a cure could be reasonably expected within a few months' time. Almost nowhere has provision been made for anything but observation of these patients — instead of hospitalization.

During the war, also in the hospital field, it was the civilian hospitals supported by government funds that suffered most in the loss of nursing and technical staffs, because the inflexibility of budgets did not allow provision for meeting salary raises brought about through competition.

We need to cite only two other examples of the influence of control of medicine at the federal level to show that it is not favorable. In general, the clinical competence of most regular medical officers in the armed forces is way below that to be found in the civilian group. At the beginning of this recent war, it was only the superhuman efforts of medical educators that reluctantly wrung from the Army and Navy officials a change in their program of medical education and training which, had they been adamant, would have practically wrecked medical education during the entire period of the war.

The original formulation of the legislation now embodied in the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill consisted of a plan providing for almost complete socialization of medical practice. It was drafted by the Social Security Bureau, without consultation with the medical profession. It was presented to the leaders of the profession at a conference in Washington with the statement that they were called there to be informed that this was what they were required to accept — not to be asked for cooperation in drafting a bill that would meet any of the profession's objections.

Dr. Solomon's reference to philanthropy strikes me as a very weak argument inasmuch as wherever its funds are found used in the broad field of medicine, it really represents the vision and social conscience of private citizens who are operating way ahead of the government in all fields of medical progress. The tremendous contribution of the Rockefeller Foundation in the broad field of public health both here and abroad represents a compensation for government negligence or indifference.

Again, it was philanthropy which early in the century brought about sweeping reforms in medical education. While one must admit that organized medicine shares equally the responsibility for the inadequate standards of that time, yet it was the leaders in medicine who stimulated and encouraged this study, rather than any appreciation by the leaders of government that medical education was failing to produce competently trained physicians to care for the ills of the community.

I think Dr. Solomon is giving a very misleading impression when he intimates that the medical profession has been slow to cooperate and has taken an isolationist attitude by not integrating medicine with other sciences. I might accept the criticism that possibly physicians did not appreciate the importance of sociologic factors as they should have, and that economic self-interest

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may have been a motivating factor recently in blinding a portion of the profession to desirable changes. But medicine has always been integrated with physics, chemistry, physiology, psychology, anatomy and biology — to mention the more important sciences. Without close integration with these, medical education would be impossible.

The weakest of Dr. Solomon's arguments in my opinion is that now that doctors have accepted most of the Murray-Wagner-Dingell Bill, why not take the whole thing? To my mind, it is as unpersuasive as an argument which suggests that because you might have eaten four-fifths of an apple, you should eat the other fifth, though it be spoiled. I myself would prefer to be more discriminating. The basis on which many thoughtful physicians object to this section (compulsory health insurance) of the Bill which in many other respects is desirable, is simply that (as I pointed out in my own presentation) it is potentially dangerous as affecting the quality of medical service, and through not providing for the elimination of the deficiencies which I have mentioned. Possibly my only objection to the economic aspects of the section on compulsory health insurance would be that it would insure a good many relatively incompetent physicians a remuneration beyond that justified by the quality of service they might render.

Dr. Solomon is right in intimating that group practice would probably give the citizen a better quality of care than he is now receiving. He fails to appreciate that for any group to render satisfactory service, the doctor in the group who represents the general practitioner of today should not be one with his inadequacy of training, but rather a specialist in his own right in the broad field of internal medicine — so that while he maintains to the family the essential position of guide, counsellor and friend, he has that sufficiency of training and that medical competence to be the leader in the group rather than a feeble, ill-trained practitioner whose hands are held up by a group of specialists surrounding him. Government control of medicine is in no way essential to the development of group practice, and it will probably be more efficiently conducted under the conditions which I have advocated than otherwise.

Dr. Solomon's final contribution that the answer is that government can practice better medicine (presumably, than we enjoy today) I consider completely a non sequitur, begging the question. The deficiencies in medical practice today are sufficiently great that even if government did practice better medicine tomorrow, it might still be far from good medicine.

Most of my remarks, in which I have been obliged to show my own conclusions regarding the question posed, would rather apply as arguments in favor of Mr. Bryan's position. I take it, from reading his article, that, like myself, he has not any deep-rooted objection to the idea of government control of medical practice per se, but that he also is sufficiently concerned with the preservation and improvement of the quality of medical care and with the necessity of an atmosphere of freedom in which progress may be made. I assume that his opposition is based on the fear of inflexibility of patterns.

Occasionally, in reading, one comes across paragraphs which in themselves express fundamental truths so well that they are worthy of repetition and of being preserved even apart from the text. Such a paragraph is the following one of Mr. Bryan's, which expresses so well what happens in social progress — particularly where the search for freedom is not conducted in the manner of tolerance and humility, but in that spirit of egotism and conceit well exemplified by the bigotry and intolerance of the Puritans who came to this country to escape religious persecution abroad.

> We have spoken of "revolutionary progress in medical science." Such progress in the past implies, if it does not promise, more revolutionary development in the future. Medicine and its allied or contributory sciences must remain free of the shackles that inevitably accompany governmental operation. For when idealistic social purposes have been legislated into bureaucratic mechanisms, practices and policies tend to harden into nationally standardized patterns. Flexibility is lost, and any revolutionary revisions dictated by new knowledge are anathema to the harried administrators of an increasingly sclerotic system. Thus, government medicine, which in its conceptual stages was a rallying point of liberalism, becomes at last a lumbering vehicle of moribund reaction.

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Cyril Solomon

We three have examined and diagnosed, and have attempted to prescribe treatment. There have been several points of agreement among us. We feel an inadequacy of medical service in distribution, in quality, and in facilities. There is agreement that government participation is necessary to assist in bettering care. We differ on where and to what extent government is to be permitted in medicine. My thesis has been that the government *is* in medical practice, and that its responsibility should be extended. Mr. Bryan, on the other hand, implies that your wife can be delivered by a doctor paid by government funds for maternal welfare, but if she breaks her leg, that doctor or one of his associates is not good enough. How he can draw a line between the yellow and orange in the rainbow I cannot tell.

I also find it misanthropic to imply that so many people will be malingering and so many people will want sickness excuses that doctors will be forced to become venal to satisfy the patient's whims. Most doctors are honest. As for the dishonest physician, he is paying his rent now from the visits of hypochondriacs and malingerers. Under government control, hypochondria will no longer be profitable to the physician, who will be able to treat the patient's illness, instead of his whims.

Both Dr. Woodruff and Mr. Bryan fear the government in medicine. Why assume that government is an inevitable evil? It is paradoxical that we have just finished a war to preserve this government and its democratic principles, and yet deprecate and abuse it by word and attitude. Organization is essential for survival. Organization means government. The organizational inadequacies of the distribution of medical services are, therefore, largely the concern of government. The inadequacies in quality which Dr. Woodruff points out are the joint concern of the medical profession and the government.

My associates enter a plea for the voluntary prepayment plans. These plans are a quarter-step in the right direction. But they tend to become obstacles by building overlapping programs which are difficult to scrap. General coverage is not possible, except at high premium rates which can be paid only by those who need relief least. In 1945, 2,600,000 persons were enrolled in medical society prepayment plans. Another 2,600,000 are probably enrolled in prepayment plans of other types. At a time when purchasing power was at an all-time high, only a small fraction of our population decided to avail itself of these voluntary plans. The Western New York Medical Plan, for example, serves six counties, including the City of Buffalo — yet has only 40,000 subscribers, although it has been in existence for six years.

Most of the individuals enrolled in medical society plans are eligible only for surgical service in hospitals. Indeed, the majority of these plans are characterized by the presence of more exclusions than inclusions. The Michigan Medical Service, which has been most successful, has a limit of payment of full fees to families whose income is $2,500 a year or less. It charges $4.65 a month for hospitalization and in-hospital surgical care: this is 2 per cent of the annual income of these subscribers for a limited service. Moreover, it must be remembered that in 1945 a yearly income of $2,500 was not even subsistence level for a family. California and Michigan medical societies have had to drop the original full coverage programs because of heavy losses, and Governor Warren of California, a Republican, has advocated a state-wide compulsory health plan.

If, as Mr. Bryan suggests, there should be voluntary prepayment plans and also a government plan, he is asking for two bureaucracies rather than one. This is a kind of social schizophrenia with overlapping functions and needs. This duality appears again when Mr. Bryan discusses doctors. Many physicians are paid salaries by governmental agencies or foundations. Those doctors are a part of organized medicine, and many are in the forefront of the science of medicine. Is it true that these men lack the incentive and just do enough to get by? Parks, paid by New York City, may have saved more lives with his diphtheria toxin-anti-toxin than all the surgeons. Walter Reed was a gov-

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ernment doctor; the men of Mayo Clinic are salaried employees. More and more teaching hospitals are employing full-time men on a salaried basis. I cannot understand the insistence on the need for a physician to negotiate a direct financial arrangement with his patients. How can Mr. Bryan justify a statement like "to obliterate all direct financial responsibility . . . can only result in depreciating medical service" — when prepaid insurance will permit the doctor to be all doctor and not a small businessman too?

Philanthropy as a source of funds for pure and applied research is beginning to dry up. In order to inventory the need, Vannevar Bush was assigned to render a report. He advised government aid under government administration for approved projects. These recommendations have been incorporated into the new Kilgore Bill, which was amended after the scientists proved some provisions of the previous Kilgore Bill unworkable. It is this kind of positive approach that is necessary. Mr. Bryan's position is a negative one, based on the expectation of antagonism instead of a step-by-step evolutionary progress at an accelerated rate.

I heartily agree with Dr. Woodruff's appeal for increasing quality in medicine and can find no flaw in his educational program. Human personnel, dedicated to service — not structural steel — should remain the focal point. I do feel, however, that the economic factors play a large part in depreciating medical service. It is not completely the doctor's fault that economic instability makes it necessary for him to have an increasing and absorbing interest in the competitive race, in his income, and in his need to practice where money is — sometimes at the expense of his professional skill. Most doctors cannot afford to leave their practices for refresher courses. They intern as units in a group practice, and then go out into a professional race where each stands alone.

On the other hand, if a group is to be formed, it can be argued that the group must depend upon a stable population with a stable income. Let changes in population or income take place, the individual physician, as a member of the group, again becomes economically insecure. The answer lies in comprehensive insurance plans, which will maintain his security in terms of income.

Dr. Woodruff asks for grants-in-aid by the federal government to local units. These grants are valuable assets to medicine. The Hill-Burton Bill is such a project. It is a good bill, with the advantages of a broad and balanced program. But its disadvantages are those inherent in programs which do not go far enough. It does not contain provisions for maintenance of hospitals and payment of professional services. It leads to the danger of "ghost" hospitals. It leaves to the forty-eight states the standards for operation of these hospitals.

The problem is so complex that it cannot be solved by a couple of bills. We must not follow the policy of spotlighting interest on administrative organization and neglecting professional services, as has been done in some countries abroad. We should, however, learn from the successes of these foreign plans, as well as be warned by their failures. In every country, prepayment plans have become more, rather than less comprehensive. We should avoid too many generalizations and seek more close-ups.

Any successful plan must be clear and comprehensive. It must be practical and flexible. It must have all the administration, responsibility and authority needed. It must have professional supervision of professional services. I think compulsory health insurance will answer these requirements. The Wagner-Murray-Dingell Bill is far from perfect, but a constant cooperative working relationship, with planning mutually undertaken by the profession, government and the public, can produce a better form of legislation with this bill as a basis.

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The Readers' Forum

THE MISERY AND NECESSITY OF THE QUARTERLY

THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR *here presents a new department — The Readers' Forum. Hereafter, this department will regularly carry comments by readers on the contents of the preceding American Scholar Forum. In the Spring number, for example, The Readers' Forum will contain letters about the debate in the Winter number on the question: "Can Government Practice Good Medicine?" All such communications should be addressed to: The Editor,* THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, *5 East 44 Street, New York 17, N. Y., and should not exceed 300 words in length. Because of limitations of space, the editors cannot guarantee to print all such communications received. Letters intended for publication in the Spring number should be mailed before January 20. (Editor)*

Intellectuality in America

Intellectuality is suspect in these United States. Among other things, it is suspect of being un-American. Our culture, reluctant though we may be to admit it, is essentially a material one.

The spokesman of our civilization, for purposes of page one quotation, is more apt to be the president of the National Association of Manufacturers than, say, the president of the United Chapters of Phi Beta Kappa. National issues are usually reduced to material, rather than moral, principles; consequently, when we are asked to make moral commitments in our political life, we are usually amazed, abashed and unprepared.

For instance, when our country was confronted with the question of a policy for the world on atomic energy, we did not turn to the intellectual leaders of nuclear science. Rather, we called upon a tried and trusted business leader, an elder statesman. A noble name, but a page one name, nevertheless — chosen because it would win wide acceptance without the need for explanation. The public's verdict on the most important issue since the birth of Christ was expected to be non-intellectual.

Furthermore, we Americans tend to confuse senility with wisdom, and intellectuality with snobbery. We reserve for youth the dubious honor of liquidating on the battlefield what uninformed age decides in the conference room. In an age when reason should have reached full maturity, we tend to decry every effort at logic.

One, of course, may be inclined to say that these are harsh and unjustified conclusions. Perhaps they are. I ardently hope I am wrong in drawing them. But certainly if one accepts them either in whole or in part, they clarify the role of the little magazine in this country, just as they explain why educators, as a class, are the poorest paid and perhaps the least respected class of our society — when one considers the training expected of them.

The gist of the symposium of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR was that economics is real and earnest. So it is. Economics abhors that which will not support itself. So, one must ask, if little magazines can't support themselves without beneficent financial aid, should

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they remain alive? The answer, of course, is no. That is, if we are willing to concede that intelligence is second (to paraphrase Delmore Schwartz) to owning a Buick.

A little magazine deserves to die if it is (*a*) precious, that is, devoted to minutiae; (*b*) unconscious of the profound, perhaps as yet unexpressed truths, which nurture the future of society; and (*c*) oblivious to the fundamental morality of folk as thinkers in contradistinction to folk as voters and political animals.

Morality and intellectuality are rather vague terms in American life. If we can make a distinction, in terms of the folk, the one would be described as a religious manifestation, the other as a possible sign of agnosticism. In other words, morality tends to represent the *restraints* of the average man; intellectuality the degree of questioning of those restraints. Politics is a pragmatic mixture of morality and intellectuality; it can very well offend the latter and gain, but it tends to lose when it goes against accepted morality.

The editor of the little magazine recognizes that our artificial distinctions of morality and intellectuality (as if true intelligence could ever be immoral or unmoral) have no validity. So he ignores the popular distinction. He persists in his task, because he loves his fellow man. And in doing so, he survives. He survives because he serves the hinterlands of American intellectuality, which otherwise would be left to die on the desert of economic well-being, which epitomizes, in our country, success.

When the little magazine dies, something more than an institution will have died. A society will be entering a twilight before the dark.

Joseph A. Brandt

Needed — a Central Clearinghouse

The symposium in the anniversary number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR entitled "The Misery and Necessity of the Quarterly" makes highly interesting reading as the *apologiae* of three distinguished editors. The speculations on the necessity, the functions, the limited audience, the poverty, and the short lives of most of the "little magazines" are, by turn, convincing and affectingly rueful. But what none of the three gentlemen tries to explain is why the phenomenon of the little magazine has, in its present form and function, so brief a history. Mr. Schwartz writes "that most of the good authors of the past forty years have begun their careers by writing for little reviews," a proposition most editors would agree with — provided "forty" were made to read "twenty-five," since the spate of little magazines did not really begin till after World War I.

And the reason it did not begin till after World War I may well be that until that time — and for a little while after — we had a group of big (or comparatively big) magazines that served the principal function now served by the little ones. That function is the discovery, the encouragement and the publication of fresh literary talents and points of view. If the present day's "good authors" from Hemingway to Shapiro were first published by the little magazines, the "good authors" of the first quarter of the century, and earlier, were first published by the *Century*, *Scribner's*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Harpers*, *American Mercury* and other such.

Well, the *Century* and *Scribner's* have died; *American Mercury* has changed in format, function, publisher and editor; while *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harpers* have become largely magazines of comment on current affairs with a very limited space for stories, poetry and criticism — and that space more or less conventionalized, seldom a platform for revolutionary or even very fresh literary points of view.

Into the void have sprung, or at any rate trickled, the little magazines — each, as Mr. Ransom points out, with its own point of view or set of values, each representing a movement with some geographical or intellectual center. And because of the self-imposed limited horizons, each of the little magazines continues to talk largely to itself till, to quote Mr. Bixler, the list of contributors bears a remarkable resemblance to the subscription list.

How much healthier it would be if many new voices and fresh points of view could

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find space between the covers of one magazine that might be expected to reach everyone honestly interested in contemporary literature. The initial backing for such an enterprise would not be difficult to find either from one of the eccentrics described by Mr. Schwartz or from a book or magazine publisher. The business experience and talent to launch it and keep it going is available in large quantities. What would be difficult, perhaps impossible, to find would be the ideal editor — a man of almost infinite energy, taste and learning, with understanding and sympathy in many different camps, and the respect of all of them.

But failing the ideal, there is still room for a more catholic journal of letters than any represented by the little magazines, one in which most young writers would consider it an honor to appear, one that would encourage and stimulate the profession of letters by its own patent health. The little magazines, far from disappearing, ought then to become healthier themselves by virtue of this central clearing house of ideas, while the "big" magazines — the *Collier's*, the *Saturday Evening Posts* and the women's magazines — might gain courage in their current tentative efforts to widen their own literary horizons.

Henry W. Simon

The Little Magazine an End in Itself

At the time the Editor of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR asked me to contribute to this symposium I was resigning from the editorship of the *Sewanee Review;* and I did not think it entirely proper for me to contribute to a symposium of editors. I am grateful to Mr. Haydn for the privilege of commenting upon the articles by Messrs. Ransom, Bixler and Schwartz, who are still actively editing little magazines. I find very little to add to their remarks.

The uneducated literacy of the American public has perhaps been a greater menace to a high literary culture than the ninety-five per cent illiteracy of the Russian peasant in the time of the Tsars. And when you lodge this uneducated literacy in a dominant middle class whose chief aim is a "high standard of living," you get the commercialism for which the American publishing system is frequently blamed — but for which it ought to be blamed only because, like General Foods or Standard Brands, it responds, in its own way, to the generalized and mindless "culture" of the United States. (There is perhaps a symbolic irony in the names of these dispensers of abstract foods: General and Standard.) The big publishing mergers of recent years move in the same direction.

I agree with Mr. Schwartz that only by means of the little magazines in the past thirty years has something like Arnold's "current of ideas to the highest degree animating" been made possible in this country. I agree with Mr. William Barrett, in *Partisan Review* (Sept. – Oct., 1946) that the little magazines have not been merely useful as stepping stones to *Harpers Magazine*, the *Atlantic Monthly* and the big book publishers; they have been ends in themselves. I would go further than either Mr. Schwartz or Mr. Barrett: without the little magazines the tradition of disinterested literary intelligence would have disappeared in America after the War of 1914–1918. Only in these magazines has it been possible for the critical mind to exhibit itself in the *act* of criticism, not in the handing down of "judgments" by radio or weekly column. Only the little magazines have kept up the close relation, which was prevalent in England at the time of Coleridge, between the publishing medium and the full intention of the writer. In our day the author reaches his anonymous public through the haphazard whims of the market; *this* manuscript is marketable, *that* isn't; and only in rare cases is the writer given the confidence which comes of a critical, as opposed to a commercial, relation to his editor.

What has been called the New Criticism has its own defects (like any other criticism); but we must not forget that, when it appeared, there wasn't an Old Criticism. There wasn't any criticism at all. I cannot imagine its getting started and flourishing in the quality monthly magazines.

Allen Tate

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An Integral Part of Our Culture

What was said about the little magazine by Mr. Ransom, Mr. Bixler and Mr. Schwartz was very well and accurately said. But all of us — and I recently, in another place, tried to deal with the subject at some length — are inclined to consider the little magazine as an almost unnatural phenomenon. This is understandable enough. The little magazine may legitimately be regarded as a symptom of our cultural unhappiness, for its existence indicates the wide breach between the mass of our educated classes and the more serious literature and thought of our time. But it is also possible to regard the little magazine without this sense of its strangeness and unnaturalness.

We assume that the really natural state of affairs is for periodicals of relatively large circulation to carry the best ideas and the best writing. This, to be sure, was the situation in the last century both in this country and in Europe. No doubt it is a desirable state of affairs, but it does not happen to be the way our culture is now organized. But this is not to say that our culture has no organization at all. What organization our culture does have may well be wasteful to the point of tragedy, but it is an organization, and not a passive one, and in it the little magazine has an integral and not an accidental place. This organization of ours works by a series of secessions from the dominant culture. But also — and this must be understood — it works by a series of introjections into the dominant culture. No statistics can measure the effect upon the dominant culture of these secessions and introjections, but clearly the effect is very considerable.

This, as I say, may be a wasteful way of organization. And the massive force of the bad elements of the dominant culture may be so great as to dispirit us. But if we make such a judgment, we must be careful that we do make it by the standard of some notion of a wholly efficient culture, or of a culture in which the fine and good are inevitably the dominant elements. There has never been such a culture, except in the minds of historians long after the event. If our notion of culture is to have any validity at all, it must comprehend the conflict and anomaly which all Western culture has.

The little magazine, then, must be thought of not as a mere cultural "symptom," or even as a makeshift therapy, but rather as an integral part of our culture. Its existence is an anomalous one, and it is the sport of the free market and the stock market and national catastrophe and supply and demand. But this existence is no more anomalous than that of the individual artist, which we have come to accept because we know that the rational alternative to anomaly may indeed bring an improvement of status and financial provision, but also other results, such as the limitation of freedom, which we do not want.

To think of the little magazine as no mere "symptom" of our culture and as no mere temporory palliative of our intellectual condition, but rather as one of the normal characteristics that define our culture, does not imply that we ought not consciously to support it and provide for it and try to make its condition less precarious. On the contrary, indeed, this way of thinking about the little magazine suggests that we give it the best of our thought and care.

Lionel Trilling

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UNDER WHATEVER SKY

Irwin Edman

Bibliotherapy

The brisk little man came into my office and said he wanted to study philosophy because he needed it in his profession. In a small South American country (though he himself is a European), he had been practicing what seemed to be a vague free-wheeling psychiatry. He had discovered, he told me blandly, that many of his patients could best be cured by prescribing the proper books. Apparently quite by accident he had discovered that certain of the books that were most healing were philosophical books about which, he said, he had hitherto concerned himself very little. He therefore had come to this country for a year to try to discover what curative volumes were in vogue in the philosophic world. He had decided hereafter to confine himself almost completely to bibliotherapy, as a form of healing.

The term, I confess, was quite new to me, but it was not without charm. It suddenly made me realize that perhaps the academic degree of Doctor of Philosophy was less of a quack accolade than I had supposed. For years now, I suddenly realized, I had been practicing bibliotherapy. And I suddenly realized how good an excuse there was for selling books at drugstores, though perhaps they ought to be placed behind the drug counter and not given out without a doctor's explicit prescription.

It chills me now to the marrow as I turn the advertising pages of the Sunday book review and see with how little restriction bibliotherapy is practiced by writers and publishers, and by reviewers, too: "This book," the phrase runs, "is strongly recommended." But for whom? by whom? for what disease of the spirit? These long historical novels, for instance, opiates many of them are truly. But is it fair to allow them to be bought by the strained and the neurotic? They might get into the habit of reading them always. I will scarcely even mention the serious dangers of the unguarded circulation of detective and mystery stories. The state controls other drugs, while it lets these things go freely on sale. And there are among books subtler opiates and stimulants than either historical novels or detective stories: works on metaphysics and morals, for instance.

It would be a fine thing, I am sure, if one could go to one's doctor to have the proper books recommended for one's health. But it is my experience that my own doctor is always asking *me* what to read. I foresee a new type of medical education in which, instead of the usual first-year course in anatomy there will be classes in the anatomy of criticism, and the last-year students making a tour of the wards will look not at their patients' chests, but at their intelligence quotients and at the books by their bedsides.

Before I was through with my visitor I decided it might be a very good thing in the long run if the medical schools were hardly distinguishable from liberal arts colleges. I smiled a little bit at my visitor who spoke of bibliotherapy, but the greatest advances in medicine have always been achieved over the stupid opposition of reactionaries. Before my bibliotherapist left, I found myself prescribing some good books for him.

Age of Specialists

Sometimes it takes nothing more than an announcement among the want ads to start one's mind meditating on some vast tendency

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of the present age. This is, as has so often been said, an age of specialists. But the word "specialization" conjures up, usually, some technologist in nuclear fission or some expert in a gleamingly modernistic electronics laboratory. Speak of a physicist or a radio technician, and one has an image at once of the life and training, perhaps even the spiritual background, of the man in question. I try to picture to myself the history, the education and the character of the young man who could successfully claim a position on the basis of being "a specialist in hot fudge, marshmallow and butterscotch toppings." I wonder what in his childhood and early youth directed him to this particular and mellifluous mastery. Was it some rainy summer afternoon at a boy's camp in the Adirondacks, when all were sitting toasting marshmallows before the fire, that his own ambition was first fired to become a marshmallow topping expert? Was it at some teen-age party when, suffering from the gooey and inexpert fudge provided by the girls present, he decided to become so expert a fudge-maker that sweet-toothed pioneers would beat a path to his door?

What is the young man like now? He could possibly be some reflective and candid mind who, believing that everything is futile and unimportant in the present chaos, feels no guilt whatever in specializing in what other people call trivial. After all, sweetness is an intrinsic value, and how surely could that be said of some of the values that some of the moralists talk about? And with the present shortage of sugar might not a man working in toppings and icings feel that he was a kind of Benvenuto Cellini plying his craft in something as rare as antique silver or spun gold? Or, perhaps, so disorganized is the state of the world that the advertisement remains altogether unanswered—and all sweet expertness, among how many other vanished arts, has left the modern world to assembly lines and regimented industry.

Remembrance of Trains Past

Every age is, of course, an age of transition, but often it is very small things that make one aware that one is living toward the end of one chapter and almost at the beginning of a new one. I saw a long statement the other day by a railroad president, rather wistfully deploring the things that the airlines were beginning to say about the railroads. I can imagine that a little over a century ago there were stagecoach owners who were persuading travelers not to be taken in by the seductive advertisements of "the covered cars." The railroad president the other day was reminding the public of how comfortable, how steady, how luxurious and how certain was surface travel in streamlined trains — and how risky, bumpy and generally crude were the accommodations of air travel. He admitted with reluctant candor that planes were faster than trains, but he said that on mature reflection he could not see one other advantage of travel by air.

There is a certain point at which one realizes definitely that one has passed into an older generation. I found myself reading the railroad president's utterances with sympathy and understanding. It was not so much that I was convinced by what he said as that I suddenly realized that for anyone born over forty years ago a railroad remains the standard furniture of his familiar earth. I think a great many people of my own generation think of the distance between cities of the United States in terms of familiar standard railroad time. I really don't care how quickly a Constellation can fly from Saint Louis to New York, but every respectable citizen knows that the railroad time, or God's time, is twenty-four hours. There are, moreover, features of railroad travel that to older people seem the very essence of transportation. The long moaning whistle of an American express train across the countryside has a music and a nostalgia that no roar of any stratoliner can equal.

Yet the railroads themselves have become so metamorphosed that I suppose one might as well abdicate altogether and travel by plane. A quiet Diesel engine is a pallid parody of a steam locomotive, and those of us who remember the real days of railroading almost miss the soot and cinders in the new soft luxuries of the air-conditioned cars. I reluctantly admit that though for years I have ranged myself on the side of everything that looked like a progressive cause, with respect

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to transportation I am almost tempted to ask time to turn back in its flight. I have probably been conditioned by the fact that one of my earliest early childhood memories is that of the last steam locomotives puffing their way on the now almost forgotten elevated railroads of New York. Ho hum, first thing I know I'll be voting for President McKinley!

The Unsuspected Moralist

I suppose I should not, in this department, be specifically discussing books, but I cannot help taking one recent book as the occasion for a brief reflection on a curious convention of deference we have established in the modern world. I was reading the essays of Frank Sullivan, collected under the attractive title of *A Rock in Every Snowball*. I read them with a delight which that deft and accomplished writer always produces in me. I realized while I was reading that Mr. Frank Sullivan is classified as a humorist and that such classification immediately prompts the literal-minded to assume that having thus labeled a writer one need not take him seriously.

This is what brings me to the theme with which I began. In order to be taken seriously in contemporary discussion, one needs to parade the apparatus of solemnity. I am not the only one, I am sure, who has read some quite ridiculous books in the last few years, volumes whose laughable absurdity was obscured by the fact that they were couched in the most solemn language, and under the usual cataloguing system had to be placed among philosophical and learned works. Plato long ago in *The Laws* reminded us that it was possible to be serious without being solemn, and he wrote *The Laws* in his old age.

In Mr. Sullivan's gay comments on existence (sadder below their gaiety than is at first apparent) I found more sensible moral judgments and a better sense of proportion about contemporary values than in many grandiose tomes devoted to a solemn consideration of the same matters. There are works by certain learned sociologists that are, without half trying, a good deal funnier than some of our professional humorists could manage. There are, on the other hand, works by some of our humorists, and Mr. Sullivan is one of them, which have far more serious commentaries to make on contemporary life and morals than many of our most pontifical moral analyses. We are a great people for telling jokes, but we have been a little ashamed of noting seriously what our humorists are driving at. This is why it is now only very lately being adequately realized how very much more than a joker Mark Twain was. We are also, despite all our familiar brashness, a deferential people, and that is why it has taken us so long to discover how amusing some of our most solemn thinking often can be.

Patience

"But the greatest of these is patience," said my friend over the telephone. He had been speaking of a difficult situation in his own life and I had been sympathizing. And I fell shortly afterward into reflection on that sober and pedestrian virtue. Patience, like charity, is long-suffering and kind. It is, moreover, the most practical of the virtues. For, with its aid and sustaining, all calamities can be endured, all fulfillments bearably and even hopefully awaited. Then, if the fulfillments do not come, patience itself has become a habit, and renders the lack of fulfillment less hard to take, and the pain of privation more supportable.

My friend, himself a notable exemplar of this homely excellence, has with patience before now borne my borrowing of many of his ideas. He will not, I know (for nothing can de-philosophize him), be annoyed with me for filching this notion from him — as, I am sure, I have unknowingly filched many before. For it is only by a rare coincidence of honesty and alertness in one's psyche that one is aware clearly that an idea is not one's own.

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Model Development (Restricted)

Louis Ginsberg

Bus-passengers out in the suburbs see
  The crisp, white houses like a formula spread,
Brag with theatrical simplicity,
  And boast with rhetoric of a flower bed.

Hedges with ostentatious primness strut.
  Of every bit of litter grass is free,
Except where new lawn mowers failed to cut
  The stealthy tares and weeds of bigotry.

Insides are brilliant with their drape and chrome,
  With glittering plumbing, white-tiled baths to last.
Polished and antiseptic is each home,
  With moth-proof closets, hoarding, too, the past.

Antidotes wait for every ill and stain,
  Yet where is plumbing glittering as this —
Where are the neat and polished pipes to drain
  The noxious, piling silt of prejudice?

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Puritan Afternoon

Kingsley Tufts

They sat apart and watched the slanting rain,
The wild, persistent downpour of the rain
That held them prisoned. Neither now could go
And neither dared to move. Defeat might show
In the lifting of a hand, or breathing faster;
A toe tapping the rug might bring disaster.

Drop followed drop against the widening stain.
She might have got a rag, sopped up the rain;
He might have stayed the torture with a word,
Coughed, or moved a chair. Yet to have stirred
Had brought them nearer, threatened and diminished
The overwhelming sense of things finished.

The splash from gutter spout to foaming drain
Pounded the frayed senses, teaseled the brain.
He would not look at her, nor she at him;
They sat watching the window with faces grim,
Edged with lightning, while the serpent of long thunder
Writhed through the sky and circled them, over and under.

◎ The work of KINGSLEY TUFTS, poet and short story writer, has appeared in *Harpers*, the *American Mercury*, the *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Coronet* and other publications.

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The Revolving Bookstand

History and the Novelists

Edmund Fuller

David the King, by Gladys Schmitt. New York: Dial Press. $3.00.
Then and Now, by W. Somerset Maugham. New York: Doubleday & Co. $2.50.
The American, A Middle Western Legend, by Howard Fast. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce. $3.00.
In the Blazing Light, A Novel about Goya, by Max White. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce. $2.75.
The Unterrified, by Constance Robertson. New York: Henry Holt & Co. $3.00.
There Were Two Pirates, A Comedy of Division, by James Branch Cabell. New York: Farrar, Strauss & Co. $3.00.
Past All Dishonor, by James M. Cain. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. $2.00.
Duchess Hotspur, by Rosamond Marshall. New York: Prentice-Hall. $2.75.
The Black Rose, by Thomas B. Costain. New York: Doubleday & Co. $3.00.
The Foxes of Harrow, by Frank Yerby. New York: Dial Press. $3.00.

An unfortunate person once said in my hearing, "Of course, I never read novels," and then went on to explain that his delight was in the more substantial fare of history. The question of the relative intellectual rewards of reading history and novels suggests an examination of that fictional school in which the two meet — the so-called "historical novel."

There has flourished in recent years the myth of "scientific history," the notion that because the literary style of Prescott or Carlyle or Macaulay has given way to a more barren, seemingly clinical prose this is of itself "proof positive" that the new historians are more objective, better informed, and less susceptible to the pressures of temperament and prejudice than the old school historians. Obviously historians cannot be appraised as a school. They must be appraised on the merit of specific performance. We need look only at the last two books of Charles Beard to see the disintegration of all objectivity and pretense of clinical analysis in one of the erstwhile ornaments of this "scientific" school. We must admit that even if the historian sets forth his facts in a manner free of emotional language coloration or any crude perversion of "truth," it is nevertheless he who must decide what is "truth." The act of selecting from the mass of data that which he considers pertinent, and then of restricting this, in turn, to practical physical limits, is in itself an act of interpretation influenced by temperament and prejudice.

I think, therefore, that when a thoughtful artist says, "I will interpret history, fully acknowledging the existence of my subjective attitudes, and will do this in the form of the novel so that I can re-create most completely the essential quality of the era or event as I see it," this man may make a major contribution to history — assuming his abilities to be commensurate with his undertaking. No professional historian has the right to brush him off simply because he employs the novel as his vehicle. I challenge any single volume of history to equal *War*

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and Peace in conveying an understanding of Russia in the time of Napoleon's invasion.

Once in a while the literary folk have debated the merits of the historical versus the contemporary novel in terms of creation versus re-creation. Some writers sneer at the employers of historical materials as lacking in invention. The foolishness of this attitude is evident when one considers the use of historical or traditional subject matter in a great proportion of the major works from Homer to modern times. It springs from the fallacy of "originality" or "making things up" as a virtue in itself. This thinking has produced the horrors of O. Henry and modern magazine fiction. Obviously, great novels proceed from the greatness of the author's thinking upon great themes. Characters and events of history will always offer rich materials to the writer. His measure has nothing to do with the fact that he uses them; it will lie in the use he makes of them.

Historical novels may be grouped in two main types: the interpretive and the romantic. The first speaks for itself and is, in the true sense, the novel of history. The second would be more accurately described as the "period" or "costume" novel. History, as such, is largely incidental to it.

It is natural that the historical novel is so commonly made the vehicle for romance. In it we are immediately removed from the environment, both of time and place, from the daily trials and pressures of which we are wearied: ergo, we are in a better place. The strange environment is commonly, even if falsely, supposed to offer a wider range of personal, individualistic exploit than the workaday world. Also, the sexual peccadilloes of a bygone time (they were an immoral, heathen lot in those days, anyway) are easier for many persons to wink and blink at than close-at-hand sin. Then, of course, there is an elementary glamour in costumes and stage sets.

Soothsayers in the book trade have said for years that "the vogue of historical novels is going to end." It isn't so. The vogue is not and never was for the element of history in itself. It is for a certain type of story which, for the reasons just cited, often employs the vehicle of history. If the taste for a basic story formula changes, some historical novels, written in such a formula, may suffer. The good book, the book of substance and quality, whether or not historical, will always find its market.

I have chosen ten historical novels published or current within the past year. They represent most of the sub-species of their kind. The first four are of the sort built around an historical figure as protagonist, sometimes unfortunately called "biographical novels." It is characteristic of these that they often employ no fictional characters except as minor supports and supernumeraries.

The best of this series of books, and one of the best in any class of recent years, is *David the King*, by Gladys Schmitt. I found it an intoxicating and exalting book. Miss Schmitt is an artist of exceptional power and subtlety. She has mastered the biblical cadence appropriate to her story without affectation or the sacrifice of modern spirit.

Biblical, or quasi-biblical novels have been best-sellers from the days of *Quo Vadis?* and *Ben Hur* down to such items as *The Nazarene*, *The Robe* and Mann's Joseph books. (The back o' me hand to that vulgarized title of recent vintage, *Antioch Actress!*) The seemingly sure-fire market for the subject matter has accepted a tremendous variation in quality. I would be willing to back Miss Schmitt's work against the field.

She has brought to maturity the narrative and intellectual power which were evident but not fully realized in her first novel, *The Gates of Aulis*. The fullness with which she re-creates and expands the scriptural story is notable. Her probing, unsparing portrait of David is repellent at times and may offend some conceptions of the Psalmist. It shows us that a man does not progress from shepherd boy to King of Israel without corruption, and that the pursuit of God may find its triumph in its frustration.

The portrayal of Saul, overshadowing the first half of the book, rises to high and brooding tragedy. The chief weakness of the book is a certain diminishing return in the last third — not a matter of performance so much as a suggestion that the scale of the work is just a bit too large for the sustaining of maximum effect. But if valid at all, this is a minor criticism. Miss Schmitt's book possesses that rare attribute — magnitude.

Mr. Maugham's *Then and Now* came as a pleasant surprise, since I am not an enthusiast for the bulk of his work. Nor had I been encouraged by a number of reviews I had read of this book. It seemed to me that many reviewers assumed that Maugham had made a political mission of Machiavelli's the vehicle for a deft but trifling love story, which was his chief objective. It is quite

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otherwise, the little romance being a part, but not the whole, of the binding agent for a political fable. I say this in surprise at the number of critical misunderstandings — not in celebration of my own perception, or with any claim to be the only one to see the truth. The title is the simple evidence of Maugham's intent.

His Machiavelli is thoroughly convincing, the work of a master craftsman. His Caesar Borgia is excellent, if a trifle more theatrical. Maugham does not discover or reveal anything new. His political thinking is extracted from his central character, rather than injected into him. It is the cynicism of *The Prince*, and like it, is the cynicism of a man not wholly a cynic.

We can use Mr. Maugham's little parable, and cannot afford to say, "Yes, yes, we know all about Machiavelli and power politics in the Renaissance." The author puts into the mouth of Borgia a warning to Machiavelli's weak and temporizing Republic of Florence: "You are governed by businessmen, and businessmen's only idea is to make a deal at any price. Short profits and quick returns, peace in our time even at the cost of humiliation and the risk of disaster." It is not the first time people have been caught between the polar alternatives of businessmen and dictators.

Maugham has not projected his book on the grand scale. It is an excellent job within the limit of its author's intentions. It will call to mind, for anyone familiar with both books, Merejkowski's *Romance of Leonardo da Vinci*, in which Machiavelli is persuasively and similarly characterized. The latter work, however, is much more in the grand tradition than is Maugham's.

Howard Fast has apparently established himself as official historical novelist to the American people. The number of volumes of this type that he has produced, the speed with which they have followed one another, and the quality of the two most recent suggest that a change of pace might benefit Mr. Fast. I liked his earlier books, especially *Citizen Tom Paine*. The two later books, *Freedom Road*, and currently *The American*, have machine-made qualities both in literary performance and, more seriously, ideology.

Mr. Fast suffers from his own variation of Steinbeck's Disease — a weakness for simple folk who speak for the ages. Steinbeck's folks are homely philosophers, whereas Fast's are homely politikers.

Unless one approached it with a previous conviction I do not feel confident that *The American* could necessarily persuade its readers of the stature and importance of Altgeld. This is the weakness of the method used. After a few encouraging opening chapters on Altgeld's youth, we lose him forever as a human being. The book becomes a political conversation piece — sometimes interesting and informative, sometimes tedious — but essentially lifeless and one-dimensional. Mr. Fast manages at one and the same time to present Altgeld as an unrecognized Abraham Lincoln, and to patronize him for not being Eugene Debs.

The most effective passage in the book, quite moving, is the description of the funeral of Albert Parsons and his fellow victims of the Haymarket trial. The book is least effective in its caricature of Bryan (too easy to do, Mr. Fast, for you to do so glibly) and its inadequately supported castigation of Cleveland. It is an extreme case of the black-and-white school of partisan writing.

This led Lewis Gannett to raise a hue and cry over what he called the grave question of the "responsibility" of historical novelists. It's a terrible thing, he implied, that they can just set a thing down the way they see it, flinging truth to the winds, and palm it off on an unsuspecting public. Well, of course — but wherefore just novelists? How much worse it is for Dr. Beard to put down something the way he sees it and call it "basic history," than for Mr. Fast to do so and frankly call it a novel, "a Middle Western Legend." Both men can be rebuked for the crudity of their methods. I grant Mr. Fast the right to his novelist's bias — with which I sympathize — just as I grant the notorious Dr. B. the right to his "scientific historian's" bias, with which I do *not* sympathize. The point is, neither one is now using his chosen medium effectively.

Mr. Fast, for all my caviling, has made a solid contribution to American writing in the over-all body of his work. We could afford more men of his social sympathies. He owes it to himself and his readers to slow down his output and to get out of a rut which he has now worn deep. Let him take plenty of time and write us a bang-up contemporary novel.

A few years ago Irving Stone made a killing with *Lust For Life*, a novel about Vincent van Gogh. This may be said to have launched the whole succession of "biographi-

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cal novels." As a study of the life of an artist, it leads us around to the recent *In the Blazing Light*, a novel about Goya, by Max White. Mr. White had previously achieved critical acclaim with a brilliant first novel, *Tiger, Tiger*, which was notable for its insight into the inner mind and spirit of a creative artist, in this case also a painter. One of the outstanding sections of the book dealt with a sojourn in Spain and showed a deep feeling for, and understanding of, that country and its people.

These factors indicated that Mr. White's study of Goya would be an event. It is a shocking disappointment. It is a story of average merits, adequately written, and would not invite such strong criticism had it not been for the expectations its author had conjured up. The book shows no signs of the mentality evident in *Tiger, Tiger* until the last quarter, when it has finally got Goya to the point where he is too old to be climbing in and out of bed with various ladies of Spain. We do gather that he also painted, but this seems a secondary pursuit.

In those brief passages devoted to Goya's work on his powerful etchings, the author shows signs of awareness that make us feel that he could have, had he determined to do so, portrayed Goya as artist and man in full scale. That he did not do so makes the book lame and impotent intellectually and artistically, though passable as a romance. Every author has a right to more than one fumble, but it is a great shame for Mr. White and for the rest of us that he has made his first fumble with this material.

Working in the general direction of the out-and-out romance, we have *The Unterrified*, by Constance Robertson, a novel of some serious historical intent, though peopled primarily by fictional characters and dominated by an invented plot. It is a novel of New York State, centering in locale around Troy and Albany, but culminating in the all too dimly remembered horrors of the draft and race riot in New York in 1862.

Mrs. Robertson is a conscientious and able workman. She can do better than she has done in this book, for she has hampered it considerably by a rather elementary and annoying plot, insufficient in dignity and plausibility to be the understructure for this historical conflict between Copperheads and Peace Democrats on the one hand and the loyal Lincoln forces on the other. Ranyard King, son of a state senator, blunders his way

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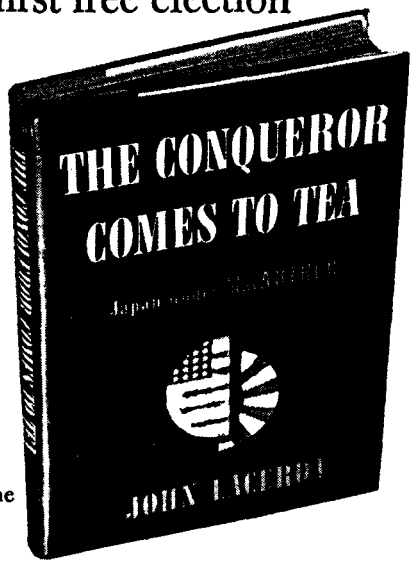

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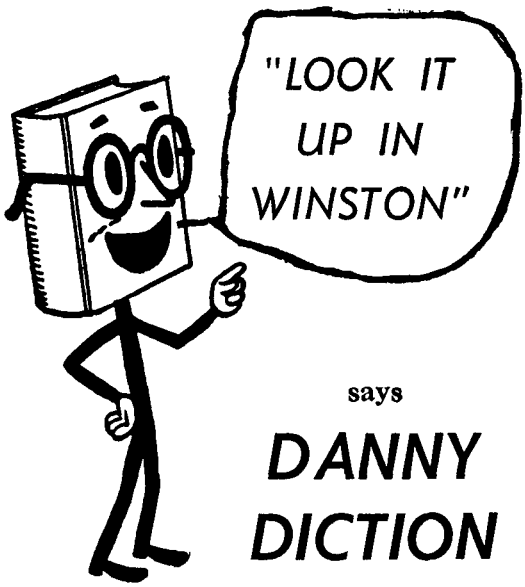

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along as a member of the Knights of the Golden Circle, the Copperhead organization, perversely convinced that he is exercising a higher loyalty. With this weak protagonist struggling intermittently toward that inevitable point where the scales shall fall from his eyes, Mrs. Robertson has fallen into the pitfall of trying to make a sympathetic character out of someone wrestling with an unconvincing dilemma — with the result that he inspires more impatience than sympathy. His affair with the young Southern beauty who is married to his father is a mish-mash of posturing and mock-heroic moral struggle, all of which is pretty discouraging. With her considerable abilities, Mrs. Robertson should build her more stately structures.

In this time of inflation it is, I suppose, ironically appropriate that the most inflated reputation in modern American literature should come under scrutiny. *There Were Two Pirates*, by James Branch Cabell, is an affront to the art of the novel, historical or otherwise. The book itself is a highly inflationary product in content, packaging and price, and about the best that can be said of it is that the illustrations, which pad it out to sufficient bulk to call it a book, are rather pretty. I can only recommend it to somebody who wants to look at the pictures. The publishers have sought to invoke the era when Cabell was a great name by putting on the jacket lavish praise of his past performances by five persons — three of whom, Hugh Walpole, Vernon Parrington and H. L. Mencken (sic) are dead.

The story is a little conceit about one José Gasparilla, pirate of Florida waters in the same era as the story of *In the Blazing Light* (for one of the pirate's womenfolk is the daughter of the Maria Luisa of Spain who figures prominently in Max White's book about Goya). It is described by its publishers as deft and subtle, but is heavy-handed and pompous. Its style sits on the stomach like the giant five-cent malteds which, in the thirties, were the feature of the sidewalk soda fountains. They were made with some kind of fizz-powder and were all head. You sucked and sucked until you were exhausted, and you still had swallowed nothing but air.

Another unhappy, and also unsavory, experience is *Past All Dishonor*, the latest in that body of work that I shall call Cain's *Everyman*. I prefer the medieval one myself. There is a vogue now among book reviewers for describing all books as modern man in

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search of his soul. Cain writes the saga, over and over, of modern man in flight from his soul. This new picture of the descent down the ladder of lust to some unfathomable degradation and ultimate death differs only in costume from his other works. There is little excuse for it, and no evident necessity to resort to an improbable and implausible pseudo-historical plot centering in Virginia City, Nevada, in the Civil War days. Its characters have no real relation to their times, to their locale, or even to their costumes, which they are continually tearing off one another.

We come now to some specimens of the out-and-out type of the historical romance. It can be a respectable form at its best, but at its worst the historical element, as I stated before, is incidental (as in Cain's book, though that is hardly to be called a romance).

Duchess Hotspur, by Rosamond Marshall, is certainly the form at its worst. It is the story of a terrifying case of bed at first sight, written on the mental and stylistic level of the comic books. I am hard put to say whether its highlight is the scene where the lover-to-be of the Duchess stands nude on a pedestal in a sculptor's studio pretending to be marble while she examines the grain of the stone, or whether it is the scene where the little laundress who also loved him dearly says, in parting, "My dear love, since there's no help . . . come . . . let us kiss . . . and part!"

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The Black Rose, by Thomas B. Costain, is a refreshing change of fare. It describes itself as a romantic novel, and does a thoroughgoing job of yarn-spinning, evocation of period and reconstruction of a variety of locales. Its general flavor reminded me strongly of a good historical novel by Jules Verne, *Michael Strogoff*, the story of a flight across Siberia, which I had nearly forgotten. Mr. Costain is an artist who defines precisely what he is setting out to do and does it beautifully. He can do more, and I very much hope that he will.

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house, who leaves Oxford in the company of a friend from the yeomanry, and goes to Cathay, where he becomes for a time a diplomatic agent for Bayan of the Hundred Eyes, general over the hordes of Kublai Khan. The book is rich in texture, and uses as the vehicle for culminating its love story a legend concerning the almost incredible journey of a lone woman and child from Cathay to London in search of her husband.

Mr. Costain tells us in a little introduction that the story grew out of his preoccupation with three extraordinary men, Friar Roger Bacon, Edward I, and the above-mentioned Bayan. He admits that the exigencies of plot relegated the first two of these to minor scenes.

In our brief glimpse of Bacon we see him persecuted at the hands of medieval Oxford's equivalent of the University of Chicago crowd. As one of the Oxford students expresses the dictum of his masters: "In days to come it may not be necessary to travel, and so it is unimportant to learn how to build sound ships. We need only to learn the established, ageless realities, the truths about humanity, bequeathed to us by the inspired thinkers of the past."

Costain has so adroitly woven into his romantic pattern threads of the social and technical conflicts of his period, such as the decay of feudalism, the long-bow displacing the cross-bow and gunpowder displacing both, etc., that it would probably be an exciting thing if he would do a job on somebody of the stature of Roger Bacon, without encumbering himself with any of the obligations of romance.

The Foxes of Harrow, by Frank Yerby, is an interesting and able job. Report has it that it was written defiantly by Mr. Yerby, a serious and socially aware author, to demonstrate that "if this is what they want, I can do it, too." He certainly can. The story of Stephen Fox's rise from the level of river gambler to wealthiest plantation owner in the vicinity of New Orleans and a lover of fair women, is in the best tradition of deep South romantic novels. On sheer points, as romance, I do not think it the equal of *Gone With the Wind*, which heads up the genre. However, its unusual quality (especially as compared to *Gone With the Wind*) lies in the fact that Mr. Yerby, without violating the fabric of his romance, has contrived to show the naked face of slavery as it was, together

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Summing up our ten novels in the light of my earlier classification of types, I find that the first five fall within the definition of the interpretive historical novel. Schmitt is superb, Maugham is good, Fast and White, and to a less developed degree, Robertson, are here represented well below their full powers. Especially is this true of Fast.

Of our second group of five, only Costain and Yerby have worked with merit. This looks like a poor showing. In order to give the historical romance its due, we should scan some of the outstanding specimens of recent years. For my money *Anthony Adverse*, in which I did a brief refresher course, tops the field for plot, style and plus-value of substance. But first class work is also done by C. S. Forrester, Kenneth Roberts, Walter D. Edmonds, and a good many others who thoroughly deserve the mention that I cannot give here.

Perhaps some larger frame of reference is needed to support my insistence upon the dignity and power of the historical novel at its best. In American history we need look no farther back than two books built around the personality of John Brown. Stephen Vincent Benet's narrative poem (or historical novel, if you will), *John Brown's Body*, is distinguished. Leonard Ehrlich's *God's Angry Man* is the best historical novel I know and, I think, one of the finest novels of any class written in America.

Consider Werfel's great *The Forty Days of Musa Dagh* (so overshadowed by the popular appeal of his sentimental retreat into mysticism); regard Feuchtwanger's *Power*, Undset's *Kristin Lavransdatter* and Robert Graves' *I, Claudius* — and you have still been given no more than a hint of the major literature built upon, and yet to be built upon, the historical base.

In the Spring Issue

THE REVOLVING BOOKSTAND will present Louise Bogan as guest reviewer.

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OUR READERS COMMENT

An Expression of Approval

To the Editor: The advance proofs have fascinated me. I must reiterate my tremendous admiration for the creative work you are doing on the magazine. Certainly this is an Emersonian example of the editor thinking.

With esteem and cordial greetings, I am,

Yours faithfully,

M. LINCOLN SCHUSTER

1230 Sixth Avenue, New York, N. Y.

Only Questionably Distinguished

To the Editor: Reading THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR is a very pleasant experience. It is therefore all the more disconcerting to come upon two minor, but avoidable errors in the Autumn, 1946, Issue.

On page 416, Dr. Binger speaks of Jean Paul Marat as a "distinguished ophthalmologist." On those of your readers unaware of the true facts this statement will undoubtedly leave an erroneous impression. It is true that Marat in 1776 published in England an "Inquiry into the nature, cause and cure of a singular disease of the eyes . . ." but then he also wrote an "Essay on Gleets" (gonorrhea), and set himself up as having a cure for pulmonary tuberculosis. However, none of these would lead the reader to the opinion that he was a specialist in venereal diseases or tuberculosis. The truth of the matter is that there were no ophthalmologists in 1776. Specialization in this branch of medicine did not take place until much later. For the source of this statement may I

(*continued on page 128*)

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refer you to my monograph, "The Specialization of Medicine, with Particular Reference to Ophthalmology," New York, 1944.

Also on page 470 of the same issue, Dean Gauss speaks of "a distinguished German historian, Du Bois Reymond." Presumably, he is referring to Emil du Bois-Reymond. If so, it is certainly erroneous to characterize him as a distinguished historian; his chief claim to distinction is as a physiologist (particularly electro-physiology). Should Dean Gauss be referring to another individual, I would like to know more about him.

It is a pity that these statements marred two otherwise very interesting articles.

GEORGE ROSEN
285 Riverside Drive, New York, N. Y.

Reply to Dr. Rosen

To the Editor: Dr. Rosen is correct in assuming I had in mind Emil du Bois-Reymond (1818–1896), and in calling attention to his work in electro-physiology. Du Bois-Reymond, however, had other interests. He had begun as a theologian and became deeply interested in *Culturgeschichte.* He exercised a considerable influence both in university circles and on the German educated public and wrote voluminously in this field. The index of the *Deutsche Rundschau* in 1885 lists almost a full column of articles contributed by him, nearly all of them on cultural history. The title of the specific article to which I referred in my article was *Culturgeschichte and Naturwissenschaft.* Titles like *English Estimates of Frederick II, On Freedom, On the Sentiment of Nationality,* indicate the extent of his historical interests.

I am inclined to believe that Dr. Rosen underestimates the range of Du Bois-Reymond's activities. The New York Public Library contains a copy of his *Voltaire in seiner Beziehung zur Naturwissenschaft* with an autograph letter to the American historian Bancroft. His part in the debate with which my article was concerned is discussed by the Italian historian, Villari, in his well-known study *Is History a Science?* (cf. Villari, P., *Studies Historical and Critical,* N. Y., 1907, p. 12).

In view of the nature and volume of Du Bois-Reymond's historical work, I am not convinced that I was wrong in using the noun "historian." Dr. Rosen's communication has led me to reread a number of Du Bois-Reymond's contributions to cultural history. My error was not one of fact, as Dr. Rosen believed. It was worse. It was an error of judgment. In spite of the vogue and influence of Du Bois-Reymond in his time, I realize now that the adjective "distinguished" in my phrase "distinguished historian" was too lightly bestowed. I am grateful to Dr. Rosen for this opportunity to withdraw it. What nouns or adjectives he deserves for his work in science, I am happy to leave to Dr. Rosen.

CHRISTIAN GAUSS
Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey

The Language of Malta

To the Editor: Referring to Mr. Crum's remarks on the language of Malta on page 409 of the Autumn AMERICAN SCHOLAR, this language is Aramaic, the vernacular spoken by the Jews in the time of Jesus. Hebrew had ceased to be a spoken language in Palestine several hundred years before that. Hebrew had the same relation to Jesus and his contemporaries (assuming that Jesus had an historical existence) that Latin has to the Western World or that it has in the Roman Catholic Church. Aramaic was the current tongue, as the Romance languages — French, Italian, Spanish — are now. By a freak of history and geography, it has survived in Malta.

THOMAS J. BARNUM
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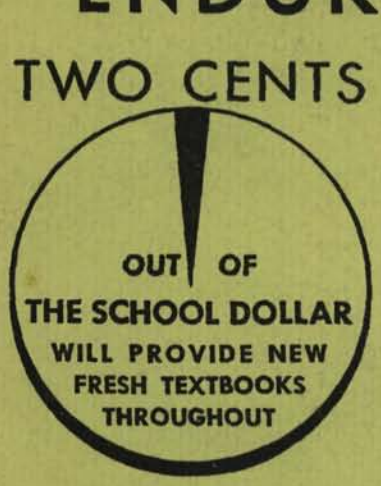

Medical Uses of Atomic Energy is the title of an article in the *Atlantic Monthly* by Professor Robley D. Evans of Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This institution was prominent in the development of atomic energy and the discovery of the atomic bomb.

Dr. Evans' article shows that through medical advances alone atomic energy has already saved more lives than were snuffed out by the bombs.

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